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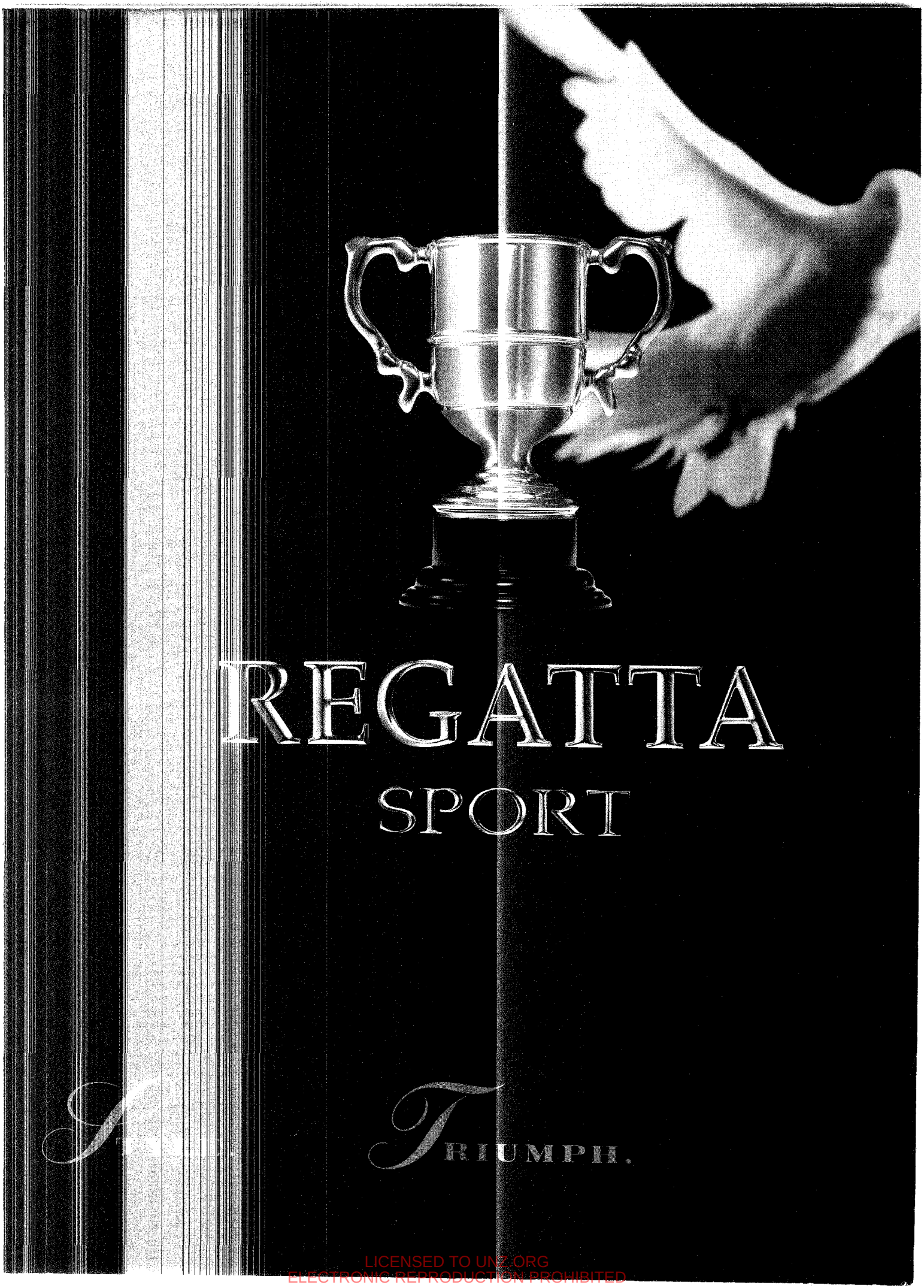

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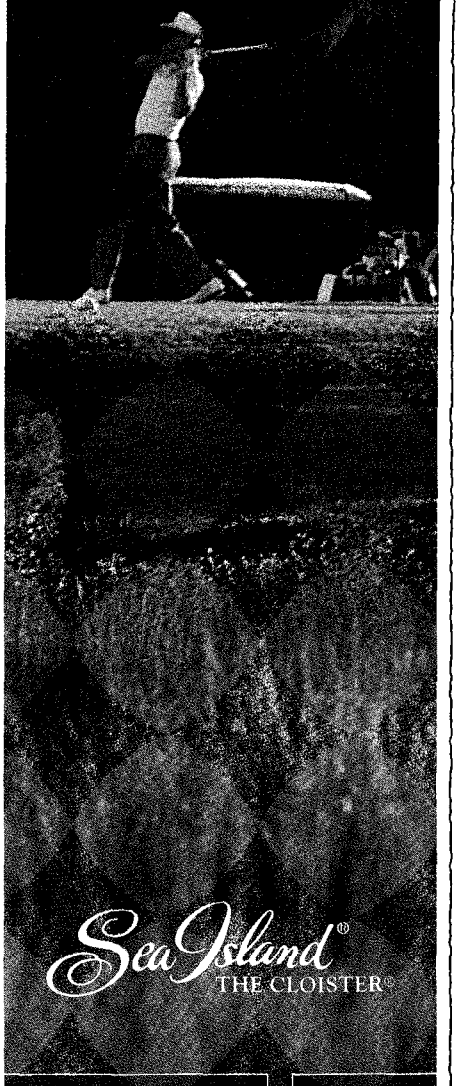

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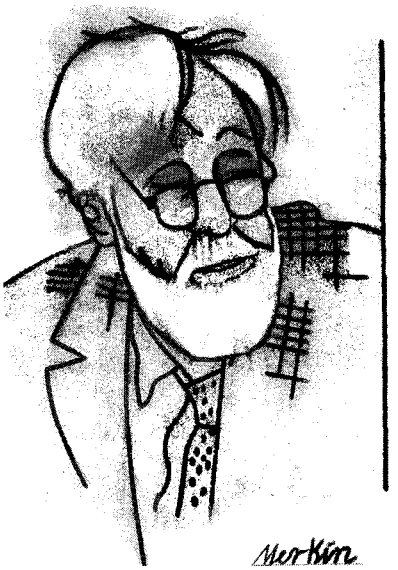
GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

THERE'S a celebration going on this fall at La Mama to fête the theatre's thirtieth anniversary, and the party girl of the moment is an invisible sow named Amanda. Amanda is the star of "Futz," a 1967 play by Rochelle Owens, that's being revived with much of its original cast (through November 3). The pig may be imaginary, but that doesn't matter to Farmer Futz (John Bakos), who looks at her from across the barnyard with an affection not seen since Tom Ewell serenaded his hog in the 1962 version of "State Fair." Bakos's attachment, unlike Ewell's, is carnal, and it meets with widespread scorn. The town tramp (Penny Arcade) thinks the love unnatural; when Futz spurns her, she riles up the townspeople. Local fellers, led by Sheriff Sluck (Peter Craig), conduct an inquisition. "How many tits does *your* wife have?" Futz says in response to their accusations. "Mine has twelve."

When Tom O'Horgan ("Hair," etc.) directed "Futz" twenty-four years ago, it was thought daring and dirty: a parable about sexual repression. This time around, his production comes off as pure corn pone—ritualistic hokum. The difference isn't necessarily regrettable. The play's seventy minutes whiz by, partly because of the acrobatic staging and partly because of the cast's high spirits. The entire ensemble deserves praise; for reasons of space, however, let's single out Doug Von Nessen, whose program bio mentions circus school and whose tongue, appropriately, flaps about like a clown's shoe. Anyone casting a "Li'l Abner" revival should give him a call. The costumer of this downtown Hogpatch, Ellen Stewart herself, would also be worth ringing up. Her outfits—denim overalls for the men, denim jumpers for the women—look fresh as a Daisy Mae.



Jason Robards in "Park Your Car in Harvard Yard"

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

APPROXIMATING MOTHER—A play by Kathleen Tolan, with Deidre O'Connell, Mia Dillon, Tonya Pinkins, and Showana Kemp. Presented by the Women's Project. Previews through Nov. 5. Opens Nov. 6 at 8. (Judith Anderson, 422 W. 42nd St. 873-3767.)

BLUEBEARD—The Ridiculous Theatrical Company proffers Charles Ludlam's 1970 play. Previews begin Oct. 31. (Charles Ludlam, 1 Sheridan Sq. 691-2271.)

COLE AND COWARD: JULIE WILSON WITH WILLIAM ROY—Porter and Noël, by the singer and her accompanist. Previews Nov. 1-4. Opens Nov. 5 at 8. (Kaufman, 534 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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THE DRESSING ROOM—The first play of Pan Asian Rep's season is by the Japanese dramatist Kunio Shimizu. Adapted by Chiori Miyagawa and based on the translation by John K. Gillespie. Previews Oct. 29-Nov. 1. Opens Nov. 2 at 8. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 245-2660.)

FROM THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA—An autobiographical play by Endesha Ida Mae Holland. In previews. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330.)

IN THE JUNGLE OF CITIES—A Mabou Mines–New York Shakespeare Festival production of Brecht's play. Previews through Nov. 4. Opens Nov. 5 at 8. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

NEGRO ENSEMBLE COMPANY—Presenting **JUST A NIGHT OUT,** a new musical by Richard and Susan Turner. In previews. (Top of the Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 475-5120.)

NICK & NORA—Barry Bostwick and Joanna Gleason are Nick and Nora Charles in this musical murder mystery—inspired by Dashiell Hammett's "Thin Man" characters—by Arthur Laurents (book), Charles Strouse (score), and Richard Maltby, Jr. (lyrics). Mr. Laurents directed. Also with Christine Baranski and Chris Sarandon. In previews. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

PARK YOUR CAR IN HARVARD YARD—Jason Robards and Judith Ivey in a two-character play by Israel Horovitz. Directed by Zoe Caldwell. In previews. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

A PIECE OF MY HEART—A play by Shirley Lauro, based on the 1986 book by Keith Walker. Presented by Manhattan Theatre Club. Previews Oct. 29-Nov. 2. Opens Nov. 3 at 7. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 581-7907.)

RAGS—A revised version of the 1986 Broadway musical by Charles Strouse, Stephen Schwartz, and Joseph Stein. Ann Crumb, Steven Keats, and Crista Moore star in this production by the American Jewish Theatre. Previews begin Nov. 2. (Susan Bloch, 307 W. 26th St. 633-9797.)

SHMULNIK'S WALTZ—A play by Allen Knee, with music by David Shire. Previews through Nov. 2. Opens Nov. 3 at 7, and runs through Nov. 24. (Jewish Repertory Theatre, 344 E. 14th St. 505-2667.)

THE TROJAN WOMEN—Euripides' play, in a translation by Richmond Lattimore. Previews Oct. 29-30. Opens Oct. 31 at 7, and runs through Dec. 7. (Pearl, 125 W. 22nd St. 645-7708.)

THE WHITE ROSE—A play by Lillian Garrett-Groag kicks off the WPA Theatre's new season. Opens Oct. 29 at 8. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523.)

OPENED RECENTLY

ANDRÉ HELLER'S WONDERHOUSE—A show that is billed as a "theatrical entertainment." (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

AND THE WORLD GOES 'ROUND: THE SONGS OF KANDER & EBB—A musical revue, with a five-member cast that includes Karen Ziémba. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

THE BABY DANCE—Jane Anderson's humorous, affecting play about two couples—Wanda and Al, of Louisiana, who are about to have a child, and Rachel and her husband, of Southern California, who plan to adopt it. The script is composed of sudden sympathy and petty misunderstanding, and three of the performances, under Jenny Sullivan's direction, are exceptional: Linda Purl and Stephanie Zimbalist, as the wives, and Richard Lineback, as Al; he could be a young Henry Fonda. (Reviewed in our issue of 10/28/91.) (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782.)

THE BALCONY—The Willow Cabin Theatre Company's production of Jean Genet's play. (INTAR II, 508 W. 53rd St. 886-1889. Closes Nov. 10.)

BEAU JEST—A comedy by James Sherman, which was originally done last year, in Chicago. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

BEGGARS IN THE HOUSE OF PLENTY—A new play written and directed by John Patrick Shanley. Loren Dean, Dana Ivey, and Jon Tenney are in the cast. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

BLUE HILL TROUPE—Presenting benefit performances of **SHE LOVES ME,** Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick's 1963 musical. (Mazur Theatre, Asphalt Green, 555 E. 90th St. Closes Nov. 2. For information about tickets, call 289-6771.)

BODY AND SOUL—John Jason and Tom Delling star in John Glines' gay romantic comedy. (Courtyard Playhouse, 39 Grove St. 869-3530. Closes Nov. 3.)

BON APPÉTIT!—Jean Stapleton in two short operas by Lee Hoiby. The first is a musical staging of Ruth Draper's monologue "The Italian Lesson"; the second is a setting of a Julia Child cooking lesson. Performed in repertory with "Cabaret Verboten." (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210.)

BREAKING LEGS—The Mafia meets Off Broadway. Philip Bosco and Vincent Gardenia play a pair of mobsters who back a new play in order to win a young dramatist for Gardenia's daughter. Tom Dulack wrote the comedy; John Tillinger directed it. With Larry Storch, Ronald Maccone, Nick Wyman, and, above all, Susan Giosa as the daughter who spins the plot. (6/3/91) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

CABARET VERBOTEN—John Rubinstein, Carole Shelley, Mark Nelson, and Betsy Joslyn in songs and sketches from Germany's Weimar era. Jeremy Lawrence conceived the show, which runs in repertory with "Bon Appétit!" (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210.)

CIRCLE REPERTORY COMPANY—BABYLON GARDENS, Timothy Mason's angst-ridden new play about the grim life of an East Village couple, provides a real field day for those who never tire of commiserating with the affluent-hip. In it Timothy Hutton and Mary-Louise Parker do a lot of relentless acting—he being sensitive, she being quirkily prosaic—and nearly all the performances, under Joe Mantello's direction, are unbearably stagy. (10/21/91) (99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100. Closes Nov. 3.)

DANCING AT LUGHNASA—The Abbey Theatre production of Brian Friel's new play. Patrick Mason directed, and the cast consists of Brid Brennan, Catherine Byrne, Donal Donnelly, Robert Gwilym, Rosaleen Linehan, Gerard McSorley, Dearbhla Molloy, and Brid Ní Neachtain. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

DISTANT FIRES—The six characters are construction workers on the job, and what plot there is concerns two of them—one b. and the other w.—who are competing for one opening in the union. The play, by Kevin Heelan, is somewhat short on substance, but is performed so naturalistically that it is hard to imagine the actors—they include Giancarlo Esposito, Todd Weeks, and Jordan Lage—without their hard hats. (Atlantic, 336 W. 20th St. 645-8755.)

FUTZ—A revival of Rochelle Owens' 1967 play. Directed by Tom O'Horgan. (La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710. Closes Nov. 3.)

THE GOOD TIMES ARE KILLING ME—The cartoonist Lynda Barry devised this memory play of words and pop tunes about a racially mixed neighborhood. At the heart of it is the friendship of two little girls, one white, the other black, who are delightfully portrayed by Angela Goethals and Chandra Wilson. The undercurrent of serious comment on race doesn't add much, but every humorous scene scores a bull's-eye. Mark Brokaw directed. (5/6/91) (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

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In a further effort to bring this important issue to the fore, Bulgari has created the Naturalia line of jewelry, designs inspired by nature's forms and colors. In November, 1991, Sotheby's will hold an international auction of fifteen pieces from the collection, with all proceeds donated to WWF.

Bulgari's support of the World Wildlife Fund is just one example of how businesses can contribute to environmental conservation programs by committing resources and raising awareness.

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THE THEATRE–Cont'd

THE HOMECOMING—A revival of the Harold Pinter play inaugurates the Roundabout Theatre's first season in its new Broadway location. With Lindsay Crouse, Roy Dotrice, Daniel Gerroll, and Jonathan Hogan. (Criterion Center, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

JEAN COCTEAU REPERTORY—Presenting two plays in rotating repertory: **THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH,** by Thornton Wilder, and **GENEVA,** by George Bernard Shaw. (Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 677-0060.)

LIPS TOGETHER, TEETH APART—Two couples share a beach house on Fire Island over the Fourth of July weekend, in Terrence McNally's very funny play about a number of serious matters. With Hillary Bailey Smith, Jonathan Hadary, Roxanne Hart, and Anthony Heald; directed by John Tillinger. (7/8/91) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

MISS SAIGON—Oh, the horror! The horror! (4/29/91) (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.)

NO CURE FOR CANCER—Denis Leary's one-man show, which received its première at last summer's Edinburgh Festival. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226.)

THE NOVELIST—In his new play, Howard Fast has given Jane Austen a love interest named Thomas Crighton. (Theatre Row Theatre, 424 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Closes Nov. 3.)

ON BORROWED TIME—A first-rate revival of Paul Osborn's charming fantasy, which was originally done here in 1938. George C. Scott is Gramps; Teresa Wright is his wife; Matthew Porac is his little grandson; and Nathan Lane is Death, whom he traps in an apple tree. All of them are splendid. Mr. Scott directed. (10/21/91) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

OUR LADY OF THE TORTILLA—A comedy written by Luis Santeiro and directed by Max Ferra. Three performances a week are in English, and three are in Spanish. (INTAR, 420 W. 42nd St. 869-3530.)

PAGEANT—A musical spoof of beauty contests. Book and lyrics by Bill Russell and Frank Kelly and music by Albert Evans. Conceived and directed by Robert Longbottom. (Blue Angel, 321 W. 44th St. 262-3333.)

PENN & TELLER ROT IN HELL—The dynamic duo are performing their repertoire of tricks Off Broadway. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

THE REAL LIVE BRADY BUNCH—Episodes from the acclaimed TV series, reënacted by the Annoyance Theatre, of Chicago. Something called "The Real Live Game Show" comes first. (Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 475-5120.)

RETURN TO THE FORBIDDEN PLANET—Gabriel Barré, Julee Cruise, Robert McCormick, and Louis Tucci are all adorable in this light-minded entertainment, a London import which won the Laurence Olivier Award for best musical in a year when it might have gone to "Miss Saigon" (whose producer's indignation led to the creation of a new award category). The show—a patchwork of beloved pop songs stitched together with Shakespeareana—has almost nothing to do with the cult movie it is based on, and still less to do with "The Tempest." It is more than anything else an occasion to laugh a bit and rock out a lot. One wishes the writer-director, Bob Carlton, had not cluttered up the newly restored Variety Arts (and the production) with the trappings of a spaceship flight in which the audience is meant to take part. But, as one audience member was heard to remark, "Any show that could make Cameron Mackintosh that mad has something to be said for it." (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

THE SECRET GARDEN—This lovely musical adaptation of the classic children's story by Frances Hodgson Burnett isn't just a kiddie show. Subtle, charming, intelligent, and wholly literary in its approach to adaptation, it manages both to be faithful to the spirit of the book and to comment on the particular moment in time that produced it. (5/13/91) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

SERVY-N-BERNICE 4EVER—A drama by Seth Zvi Rosenfeld, with Ron Eldard and Lisa Gay Hamilton. Terry Kinney directed. (Provincetown, 133 Macdougal St. 477-5048.)

SONG OF SINGAPORE—A musical with a promising concept: turn a Polish veterans' hall into a Singapore night club, circa 1941, and spill murder and mayhem onto the premises. Unfortunately, the lavish settings (by John Lee Beatty) and the musical talent (led by the winsome and versatile Donna Murphy) cannot conceal a very thin story and a host of excruciatingly bad jokes. Another problem: on a busy night the seating arrangements here can be extremely cramped. (17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. 228-0844.)

UNIDENTIFIED HUMAN REMAINS AND THE TRUE NATURE OF LOVE—All is not well in Edmonton, Canada—that's the news in Brad Fraser's play about down-and-outers in one of Canada's provincial capitals. The script, which would have been passé in 1975, is full of desperate young people doing drugs, having sex, leaving telephone messages, committing gory crimes, making prophecies, and crying out in anguish. Tennis, anyone? (9/30/91) (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.)

THE WILL ROGERS FOLLIES—The sets by Tony Walton, the direction and choreography by Tommy Tune, the costumes by Willa Kim, and the row upon row of Ziegfeld girls make a feast for the eyes, but the funny bone and heart are neglected. Keith Carradine makes an engaging Rogers, but that is not enough, despite Cy Coleman's pleasant score. (5/13/91) (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 730-8200.)

LONG RUNS

CATS: Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.). . . **CITY OF ANGELS:** Larry Gelbart, dramatist; Cy Coleman, composer; Billy Byers, arranger; and Michael Blakemore, director, are all in top form in this sharp, jokey musical satire about Hollywood in the forties. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.). . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run turned thirty-one in May. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.). . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1991 ½:** This newly revised revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it, and wrote the barbed lyrics. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.). . . **FOREVER PLAID:** Stuart Ross's loving tongue-in-cheek salute to the "guy groups" of the fifties is a real treat. Bring your mom. Hell, bring the whole family. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400.). . . **GRAND HOTEL:** The dazzling imagination of Tommy Tune's direction and choreography and the dazzling scenery by Tony Walton almost make up for the inner vacancy of this show, but not quite. The story and characters are skimpy and the music is undistinguished. Nevertheless, there isn't a boring moment. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.). . . **LOST IN YONKERS:** There's not one glimmer of honesty or authenticity in this family melodrama by Neil Simon. Set in Yonkers during the Second World War, it's about what happens when a cowering, pathetic man has to leave his two adolescent sons with his intimidating mother for the better part of a year. (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.). . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.). . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.). . . **ONCE ON THIS ISLAND:** An enchanting musical, set in the Caribbean, by Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.). . . **PERFECT CRIME:** A murder mystery by Warren Manzi. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 695-3401.). . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** This much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.). . . **SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION:** You're best off knowing nothing about the John Guare play other than that it represents a perfect meeting of the playwright and the director Jerry Zaks. Out of a true story—one apparently about celebrity and Good Samaritanism—Guare has fashioned a wistful comedy about race, class, money, imagination, collective conscience, individual psyche, and the impulse toward art. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

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DANCE

JENNIFER TIPTON is best known for the light she puts onto theatrical stages, and next best known for the fact that nearly every time she does her job someone bestows an award on her. The last time we saw her in person was this past spring, at the Asia Society, where Paul Taylor spoke about what a good automobile driver she was—she's the Taylor company's resident lighting designer—then pressed a silver bowl her way on behalf of *Dance Magazine*. Ms. Tipton designs light that really moves; its presence is so palpable that you could almost clock its mileage. She can also talk about her work as calmly and clearly as if clocking the mileage were all there was to it. This Friday, November 1, at 5:30 P.M., she will give a behind-the-scenes lecture in the main theatre of City Center, where she'll use the theatre's lighting system to demonstrate just how angles, colors, and compositions can dramatically affect the look as well as the significance of what dancers do. (Of course, you can also catch up with her effects during the Taylor company's performances at City Center this week.)

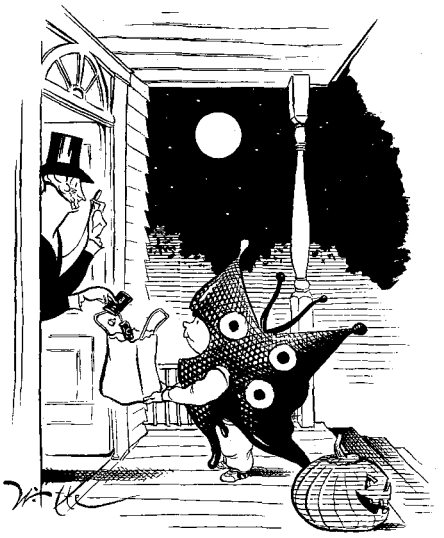
We are always curious to hear what Ms. Tipton is up to, and so we tracked her down in Minneapolis, where she had just spent ten weeks staging "The Tempest," for the Guthrie—her directorial début. How would she contrast actors with dancers? we asked. "Dancers and singers have much more structure than actors do," she said. "Dancers have steps that must be done at a certain time. Singers, too, have words that go with specific notes. Of course, actors have words, but how they say them is less structured. There is staging—blocking—for actors, but that is not as specific as choreography, either. I did find that I felt very strongly about movement throughout. 'The Tempest' seemed to call for something stylized. If the actors moved in a 1991 way, it was not satisfying for me."

What was the light like in Minneapolis? we asked. "I think this is one of the few cities where I'm constantly aware of the light or sky," she said. "It's always wonderfully dramatic." And New York? "There I'm mostly indoors or in the subways," she said. "I'm not really aware of the light."

PAUL TAYLOR DANCE COMPANY—Oct. 29 at 8: "Sunset," "Nightshade," and "Company B."... ¶ Oct. 30 at 8: "Aureole," "Icarus at Night," and "Speaking in Tongues."... ¶ Oct. 31 at 8: "Esplanade," "Fact & Fancy," and "Cloven Kingdom."... ¶ Nov. 1 at 8: "Airs," "Dust," and "Company B."... ¶ Nov. 2 at 2: "Dust," "Fact & Fancy," and "Company B."... ¶ Nov. 2 at 8: "Esplanade," "Fact & Fancy," and "Cloven Kingdom."... ¶ Nov. 3 at 3: "Airs," "Dust," and "Company B."... ¶ Nov. 3 at 7:30: "Icarus at Night," "Sunset," and "Company B." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

BALLET HISPANICO—A two-week engagement. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Oct. 29-Nov. 1 and Nov. 5-6 at 8, Nov. 2 at 2 and 8, and Nov. 3 at 2 and 7:30. Through Nov. 10.)

BALLET CONCIERTO DE PUERTO RICO—Presenting "La Calinda," "Muñecos," "Paquita," and other works. (Triplex, 199 Chambers St. 618-1980. Nov. 2 at 8 and Nov. 3 at 3.)



NIGHT LIFE

"SOME people come expecting a black band—you know, Living Colour or Fishbone," David Ryan-Harris, of Follow For Now, told a reporter recently. "A lot of people just come looking for straight-out rock and roll, and a lot of people come not knowing what to expect."

We saw the Atlanta-based Follow For Now play out of town a few months back, and it was one of the more adventurous shows we'd seen in some time. F.F.N.'s music has been described as a "funk-thrash-rock-blues" hybrid, and, with the exception of rap, that about covers it. Their début record, which was released last month, begins with a distorted guitar trill that we take to be a reference to Hendrix. Before the album is through, it has managed to cover some fairly disparate territory: funk, both hard-core and languorous; rock, with and without positive messages; a cover of Public Enemy's "She Watch Channel Zero"; and a sardonic, sampleless rap, called "Milkbone," that borrows the Sam-I-am locutions of Dr. Seuss's "Green Eggs and Ham."

Follow For Now will be one of seven bands playing at CBGB on October 30. Our guess is that that show will be something of a scene and that one might get a better look at them when they tour with 24-7 Spyz later this fall. Either way, if you decide to take in one of F.F.N.'s sets—and we think you should—you're best served by not knowing what to expect.

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town.... ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**JEFF HARNAR**, who is performing in the Oak Room, is a young singer with a lot of presence: a big voice, a big smile, and a big, overtly theatrical manner. His shows usually include old favorites and some nice musical surprises. During this run, Harnar is offering two different programs: "The Warner Brothers Song Book" Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-thirty, and "Gershwin's Hollywood" on Fridays and Saturdays at eleven-thirty. Dining.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A tony cabaret attained by passing through an opulent tapas restaurant. **ANN HAMPTON CALLAWAY**, who's performing here through Nov. 2, is a fine singer whose set list usually includes her own songs, songs by lesser-known New York composers, and songs improvised around suggestions made by musically inclined patrons. One has never known how seriously to take the wonderfully campy, over-the-top **PHOEBE LÉGÈRE**, and she seems to like it that way. The singer-pianist will be performing here as of Nov. 3 with a new show that involves Marlene Dietrich and, somehow or other, a gorilla suit. Légère's a trained pianist, cellist, and accordionist; she has a four-octave vocal range and has written an opera. She's also appeared in "The Toxic Avenger II" and can play piano with one leg hitched up behind her head. Shows Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine, Fridays and Saturdays at nine and eleven-fifteen.

BIRDLAND, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—An airy, loftlike restaurant-bar in the gray zone between Zabar's and Columbia. Music from nine. A few highlights: **PEGGY STERN'S** foursome on Oct. 30; the **PHIL MARKOWITZ** trio on Oct. 31; and **JIMMY HEATH'S** quartet Nov. 1-2 (in celebration of the saxophonist's sixty-fifth birthday). Dining.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A jazz club that would be a perfect stop on a bus tour (there's even a souvenir shop that sells Kodak). It's a good idea to make a reservation and show up well in advance. Drummer **TONY WILLIAMS**, who played with the Miles Davis quintet as a teen-ager and then went on to release some propulsive jazz-rock records of his own, brings in his band Oct. 29-Nov. 3; they're on a double bill with the Red Rodney quintet. The **YELLOWJACKETS** begin a run on Nov. 5. First set at nine. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A big, pleasant room where they pack them in until someone says uncle. The walls and columns are basic black with some rainbow detailing here and there—the place looks a little like the outside of a van. **JUNE TABOR** and **MARK EMERSON** will be here on Oct. 29. Folkie **MARC COHN**, whose self-titled début album and soulful hit single "Walking in Memphis" have garnered a whole bunch of New York Music Award nominations, comes in on Oct. 30. "Walking in Memphis" is a simple, perfect song: an evocative bit of pop built on piano arpeggios and sunny, gospel choruses. Cohn is a gifted songwriter. His sensibility isn't far from John Hiatt's: he's concerned with memory and redemption and his songs are elegant little character studies. **WILLIE NILE** appears on Nov. 2; **PAUL KANTNER'S WOODEN SHIPS** and **JOAN OSBORNE** share the bill on Nov. 3; and **CHRIS WILLIAMSON** turns up on Nov. 5 (at seven-thirty and ten-thirty). Shows at eight and eleven other nights. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar in the heart of N.Y.U. country. It's advisable to get all your talking done between sets, because once the first chord is struck the audience here—with a little help from the management—becomes as quiet as a church congregation. A trio consisting of saxophonist **GARY BARTZ**, pianist **JOHN HICKS**, and bassist **DAVID WILLIAMS** holds forth through Nov. 2. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

THE BUILDING, 51 W. 26th St. (576-1890)—An evening's worth of metal bands will be at work here on Nov. 2, among them **NUCLEAR ASSAULT** and **PANIC**. The latter is the group to watch. Panic, which is based in Seattle and led by singer Jeff Braimes, recently released their first record, "Epidemic." It's a raw, tough-minded album that mixes metal with a touch of old, Aerosmith-style rock and roll. Lyrically, the band covers familiar and not so familiar ground. Their first single, "Blackfeather Shake," falls into the latter category—it's a funny, if somewhat rabid, statement on the subject of crows. As for the band's concerts, Braimes recently told *Rolling Stone*, "It's a spectacle. I wish I wasn't *in* Panic so I could see Panic live." Music starts at eight.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound pastel murals, and, as of Oct. 29, **BOBBY SHORT**. Sets at eight-thirty and ten-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays.... ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans' Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** presides at the piano

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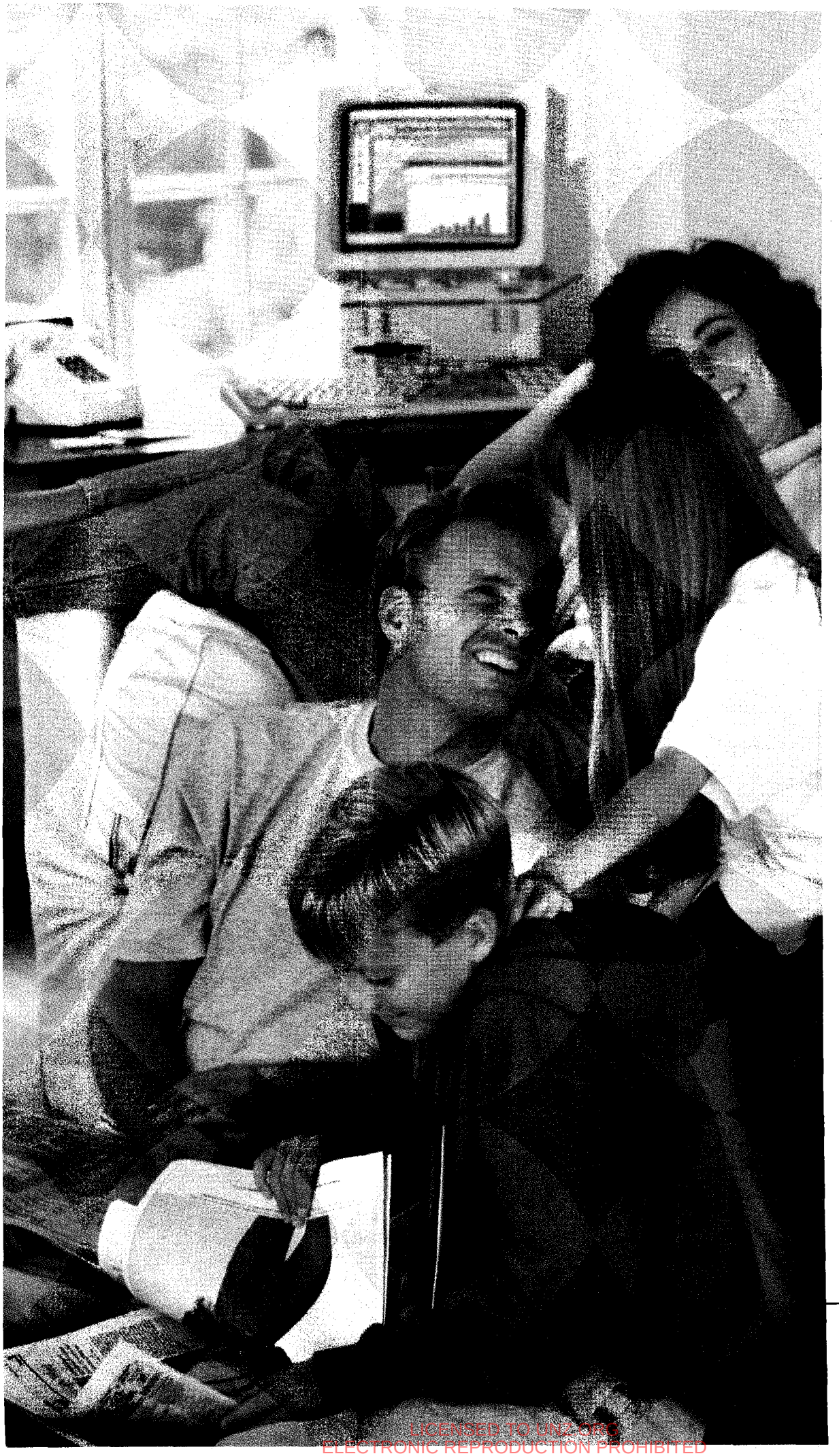

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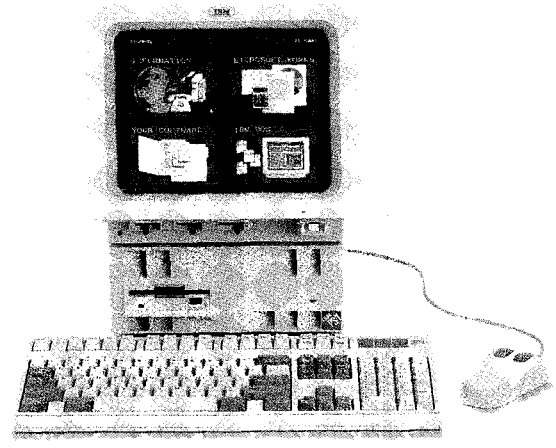

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from nine-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays. This is Carroll's fourteenth season at the Carlyle and earlier this month she released a live album that she recorded here and that includes standards by Kern, Arlen, Bernstein, and Gershwin, as well as one original called "Barbara's Carol."

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—In the late seventies and early eighties, this dark cave (graffitied walls, a battered pool table, rest rooms for the intrepid only) was the hub of a thriving punk-music scene—Blondie, Talking Heads, the Ramones, and Television were regular attractions. Other clubs of the era have fizzled, but CB's perseveres, and young hopefuls continue to fill the stage nightly. **FOLLOW FOR NOW** will be one of six bands taking the stage on Oct. 30. **DAS DAMEN** and **DIE KREUZEN** appear on Nov. 1. Music from nine-thirty Sundays through Thursdays and from ten-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

CONDON'S, 117 E. 15th St. (254-0960)—Jazz clubs aren't always known for their romantic atmosphere, but Condon's earns higher marks than most. It's a low-ceilinged basement establishment, with lemon walls and abundant candlelight. They rearranged the furniture here a while back, so that now a greater number of people look at the stage rather than at a pole. Singer **ABBEY LINCOLN** performs with a trio Oct. 29-Nov. 3; saxophonist **DAVID (FATHEAD) NEWMAN** starts work on Nov. 5. Shows Tuesdays through Sundays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty, Fridays and Saturdays at nine-thirty, eleven-thirty, and one.

EAGLE TAVERN, 355 W. 14th St. (924-0275)—An Irish pub in the meat-packing district, not too far from the boondocks. In the front room, barbirds study the TV and grumble about one thing or another, and in the back room another crowd listens to Irish folk musicians (on Fridays). Music from nine.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—The seating arrangement in this long, narrow, red-velvet-and-mirror-walled basement makes flying coach seem roomy; nevertheless, it's one of the city's top jazz spots—thanks largely to the club's talent bookers. But watch your head. **HANK JONES** leads a quintet through Nov. 3, and the **MC COY TYNER** trio, with **RON CARTER** and **AL FOSTER**, swings into action on Nov. 5. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL** leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Brass rails, vintage posters, Hirschfeld drawings, a menu full of items like bangers and mash, and a piano. Knickerbocker's is an airy, good-spirited place, and, while music often takes a back seat to conversation, some able piano-and-bass teams turn up regularly. Pianist **STEVE KUHN** works solo Oct. 30-31 and with bassist **DAVID FINCK** Nov. 1-2. Music from nine-forty-five.

LONE STAR ROADHOUSE, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—It's named for its Texas décor, but perhaps a more apt name would be the Second Chance, since so many lost, forgotten, or faded rockers turn up here. But the club's busy schedule includes a variety of newer acts, too. The **TEXAS TORNADOS** perform on Oct. 31 at nine and on Nov. 1 at nine-thirty. Dining.

LUDLOW STREET CAFÉ, 165 Ludlow St. (353-0536)—A modest below-stairs room that looks like a slightly spruced-up tenement-building apartment. There's cheap Ecuadoran food, a Greater East Village crowd, and, every Monday night, **BEAT RODEO**, a straight-shooting bar band that plays a mix of country, blues, Dylan, Byrds, the Velvets, and various pop curiosities. Sets at eleven.

MARQUEE, 547 W. 21st St. (929-3257)—A rock club, just off the West Side Highway, that is one of the city's main venues for college-radio fare. **TRIP SHAKESPEARE**, who'll be here on Oct. 30, is a remarkable, Minneapolis-based psychedelic-pop quartet. The band has just released its second major-label album, "Lulu," and it's just about impossible to stop listening to it—it *is* a lulu. Three or four songs sound like instant classics, and in a world awash in sampling and twenty-four-track tinkering, it's one of those rare, swinging five-star albums that might come across even better live. The **FATIMA MANSIONS**, an Irish band, will perform on Nov. 2. The group's recently released début album, "Viva Dead Ponies," is an intriguing if often difficult work, whose songs careen from spooky, syn-

Trip Shakespeare at the Marquee

thesized mood music to thrash in no time, and whose lyrics cover such ground as the downfall of Ceausescu and imagining Jesus as a London shopkeeper. Onstage, they should provide a rattling evening.

MAXWELL'S, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken (1-201 798-4064)—A plain blue back room whose far wall is decorated with round things: a Frisbee, some singles, a drum head, and the woofer from a speaker cabinet to name a few. The beer of choice here is Rolling Rock—by a landslide—and the crowd may make you feel as if you have a midterm to study for, but many of the bands that play here today will be playing somewhere more expensive tomorrow. Nov. 3 belongs to the **MEKONS**. Shows at ten on Thursdays, and at eleven on Fridays and Saturdays.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—A midtown restaurant and jazz lair for the tasselled-loafers set. The dark, sombre bar (carved-wood lions, iron grillwork) looks like a place you'd find in London's financial district; the dining room—putting-green carpet, lime-green leather banquettes—has more of a country-club feel. "At Wit's End," a one-man play about the life of Oscar Levant, starring **STAN FREEMAN**, continues through Nov. 3. The eight-member Roy Gerson Swingtet begins a run on Nov. 5, playing favorites from the repertoire of Louis Jordan. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Closed Sundays.

RAINBOW & STARS, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—Not to be confused with its richer cousin, the Rainbow Room, which is just down the hall. There you'll find expansive Art Deco glitter; here, intimate nineties glitter. The performers, with their backs to the window, compete with a view of the Hudson, the George Washington Bridge, and beyond. "The Rodgers and Hart Revue," featuring **ELAINE STRITCH**, **MARGARET WHITING**, and others, begins on Oct. 29. Shows from nine. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

RED BLAZER TOO, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—It may look like a plain old steakhouse, and the photos on the walls may look like Sardi's leftovers, but in the back room you'll find swing bands, Dixieland combos, and couples sprung from the legacy of Fred and Ginger. **VINCE GIORDANO AND THE NIGHTHAWKS**, an assemblage of thirties-style swingers, play on Tuesdays and Fridays. David Allyn's swing band comes in on Oct. 30, and on Nov. 6 the Bob Litwak Group (with Red Rodney and Derek Smith) can be heard on a double-bill with singer Yvonne Roome and her quartet. Show times vary.

RITZ, 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—This decaying theatre, once the home of Studio 54, now houses one of the city's biggest, oldest,

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and loudest rock clubs, which used to be in the East Village. The club features a broad stage, mobile-home-size speakers, plenty of room to shimmy, and, for the sedentary, a giant Big Brother video screen. The **BUZZCOCKS** are here on Nov. 1. Over the past two years or so, the seminal British punkers have been mysteriously popping up to play a show or two, and last time we caught them, this summer, they were armed with a clutch of new tunes. They can still shake up a roomful of skinheads, but some of their new material breaks from the past, veering off in directions that recall lead singer Pete Shelley's solo work. Nov. 4 belongs to the **VIOLENT FEMMES**, another punk band that has recently resurfaced. Earlier this year, the Wisconsin-bred group released "Why Do Birds Sing," their first recording in a couple of years, and the album has fared well on the college charts. Lead singer Gordon Gano's personal obsessions are a little less urgent than they used to be, but the band is in fine form: tuneful, sharp-witted, and idiosyncratic. Shows begin at eight Sundays through Thursdays, and at nine Fridays and Saturdays.

Rodeo Bar, 375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (683-6500)—A Western theme bar, attached to a Mexican restaurant. You get walls designed to simulate a log cabin; a buffalo head that blows smoke through its nostrils; a horse trailer that's been converted into a bar; peanuts for eating and, occasionally, throwing. But wait, there's more: a TV that plays tapes of rodeos, New Mexico memorabilia, and live music nightly: country, blues, folk, rock, hillbilly. Shows from ten-thirty.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great grass hut decorated with a fruit-and-bamboo motif and dedicated to such things as calypso, reggae, and bossa nova. S.O.B.'s dance floor is always jumping with Rastas and N.Y.U. students, and there's always someone on stage shouting, "Put your hands in the air!" Oct. 30 belongs to **MASSIVE ATTACK**, a Bristol, England, trio who combine hiphop and dance pop. The **ITALS**, featuring Julian Marley, are here on Nov. 1, followed by the salsa outfit Las Chicas del Can on Nov. 2. Closed Sundays. Dining.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—An itinerary stop for the international jazz groupies who, on any given night, can be seen roaming the streets of the Village. Up front, there's a glass-enclosed sidewalk café; in back is a larger room, with a pressed-tin ceiling, red brick, and more pinewood than a ski lodge. Cornettist **NAT ADDERLEY'S** quintet is in swing Oct. 29-Nov. 2. Flugelhornist **ART FARMER** and his group begin a two-week stay on Nov. 5. An electrified big band belonging to trumpeter **MILES EVANS** is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

Tramps, 45 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—A roller-rink-size Chelsea bar-and-restaurant where the emphasis is on rock, blues, and zydeco. **MARSHALL CRENSHAW** performs on Oct. 9, with **SYD STRAW**, among others. Crenshaw's latest output, "Life's Too Short," is one of his stronger efforts in recent years, full of well-crafted songs and raucous guitar work. Onstage, Crenshaw invariably surrounds himself with top-notch musicians, who help him light a fire under his tunes. Music from eight on weeknights and from eight-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—By now, you've no doubt heard about the weirdness currently in progress downstairs at the Gate: "The Real Live Game Show" and "The Real Live Brady Bunch," both of which are exactly what they claim to be. The actress playing Marcia is worth the trip. One flight up, in the Terrace Bar, the **GAIL WYNTERS** trio is at work Oct. 30-Nov. 3. Music from ten.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S, at 11th St. (255-4037)—The late Max Gordon, who opened this holiest of jazz shrines in 1935, once described the club's early patrons as a mix of "poets, W.P.A. writers, hustlers, broads on the make, and moochers." The **SHIRLEY HORN** trio is in evidence Oct. 29-Nov. 3. Ms. Horn, who lives in Washington, D.C., is a pianist whose approach has been compared to Ahmad Jamal's and a singer whose style has been likened to Billie Holiday's. Her New York début was at this club, in 1962, alongside Miles Davis; she didn't perform in the city again until twenty years later, and has since then appeared infrequently. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays. Music after nine-thirty.

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Two floors of no-nuke veggie entertainment and consciousness-raising. Listen to bands play in the Summer of Love-muralled back room; buy a tie-dyed T-shirt at the Volkswagen-bus curio shop; catch up on current events at the bulletin board and community calendar. Or, if you'd rather just be mellow, crash out in the basement hippie love pad. Pop's Cool Love, Chucklehead, and the Family Stand perform on Oct. 31. Shows from ten.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

Next Wave Festival—Nov. 5 at 7 and Nov. 6 at 8: Eiko & Koma in "Land," an evening-length dance work. Through Nov. 10. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. The festival continues through Dec. 7.)

Moscow Circus-Cirk Valentin—Opening performances of a two-month engagement by this notorious troupe. Bobby Previte has composed the score. (Gershwin Theatre, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Nov. 5 at 8 and Nov. 6 at 6:30. Through Jan. 5.)

"Fright Night"—Scary performances by Dance-noise, Jo Andres, Mimi Goese, and Alien Comic. (La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710. Oct. 28 at 8.)

Deb Margolin—Eight months pregnant and performing "Jestation" in black spandex. (Nada, 167 Ludlow St. 420-1466. Oct. 31 and Nov. 1-3 at 8.)

Dario D'Ambrosi—A performance artist from Italy in "Volare," which is about a survivor of a plane crash. (La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710. Oct. 31-Nov. 3 at 8.)

Lenora Champagne—Presenting "With You the Rest of. . ." (a new work), Oct. 31-Nov. 2 at 8, and "Isabella Dreams the New World" (a reprise from last year), Nov. 3 at 5. (Downtown Art Co., 64 E. 4th St. For information about tickets, call 979-7362.)

"Atomic Opera"—With a cast that includes the following characters: Kate Smith, dancing physicists, Robert Oppenheimer, bathing beauties, and a couple of housewives. With a score by Douglas J. Cuomo. (Ohio Theatre, 66 Wooster St. Oct. 28-Nov. 3 at 8:30. For information about tickets, call 924-0077.)

HELLO, LAMPPOST

Elegant new dark-green lampposts are being installed on 14th Street as part of the city's ongoing renovation of that thoroughfare. Thirty-six feet tall at their highest point—a crook resembling the top of a bishop's crosier—they stretch six feet out over the street, and are activated by sunlight-sensitive cells. The fixtures are modelled after lampposts struck in 1891 to commemorate that *upcoming anniversary of Columbus's landing. Although they resemble the copies of old cast-iron lights that grace many city landmarks, these replicas are made of steel, which may prove more cost-effective, according to Pierre E. Neptune, assistant chief of the Department of Transportation's street-lighting division. There will be a total of a hundred and fifty-four lamps when the project is done, spaced every hundred and twenty feet from the West Side Highway to the F.D.R. Drive. The work is just beginning, and there are still many of the old, shorter lights left standing to illuminate the street while Con Edison connects the replicas. A friend of ours who lives on 14th Street says more in sorrow than in anger that the new fixtures light up her apartment as much as they light up the street.*

ART

Rob Storr, MOMA's new curator of painting and sculpture, has boldly fulfilled what must have seemed his most pressing mission: administering a nice big booster shot to what had become a rather etiolated organism, one reluctant to embrace or tackle the vociferous content in so much recent art. "*Dis*locations," Storr's first major exhibition, is ambitious, confrontational, bracing, and histrionic throughout. The seven commissioned installations, by Louise Bourgeois, Chris Burden, Sophie Calle, David Hammons, Ilya Kabakov, Bruce Nauman, and Adrian Piper, form a sort of choral *j'accuse*—a collective reproof of racial, sexual, and class stereotypes, as well as of nationalism, governments, bureaucracies, and war.

Yet the show's greatest strength may be the illusion it conveys of having broken through the infrastructure of the museum's disappointingly corporate 1984 expansion. The French Calle, for instance, a mole by avocation, infiltrates MOMA's permanent collection with wall statements—opinions elicited from museum staff concerning individual works—in spaces temporarily vacated by the paintings appraised. Hammons turns a room with a garden view into the chaotic tableau of a post-parade mock-celebration. Burden's "The Other Vietnam War Memorial," which at first suggests a vault, is actually an enormous metal card carrousel engraved with the names of three million Vietnamese dead—a Claes Oldenburg without the laughs. Piper's and Nauman's video chamber-pieces function as pendants to one another: a futuristic gym with a talking video totem, and a fun house of talking heads.

Bourgeois, ever the puckish Vulcan, seized the opportunity to come down with unprecedented virulence on the act of procreation. In its claustrophobic, last-stop enclosure her thunderous machine—two heavy metal cylinders, one entering the other at regular intervals—suggests hard labor in mines. But it's Kabokov the Ukrainian, who best portrays the passing scene. His tableau, "The Bridge," represents a Moscow tenants'-association headquarters freshly abandoned but now occupied by a mystery army of Lilliputian figures on the march: the party may be over, but there's always someone around to clean up.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Seurat." A centenary exhibition of more than two hundred paintings and drawings by the Pointillist. Through Jan. 12. . . . ¶ "Neo-Impressionism: The Friends and Followers of Georges Seurat," best taken as a kind of appetizer before the main course, consists of eighty-eight paintings, drawings, and watercolors by Paul Signac, Camille Pissarro, Henri Matisse, and many others. Through Jan. 12. . . . ¶ A selection of a hundred and fifty American watercolors from the museum's collection. Through Dec. 10. . . . ¶ Sixteenth-century Italy will take up permanent residence in a new installation of sculptures, furniture, tapestries, and much more that reveals the influence of Leonardo, Raphael, and Michel-

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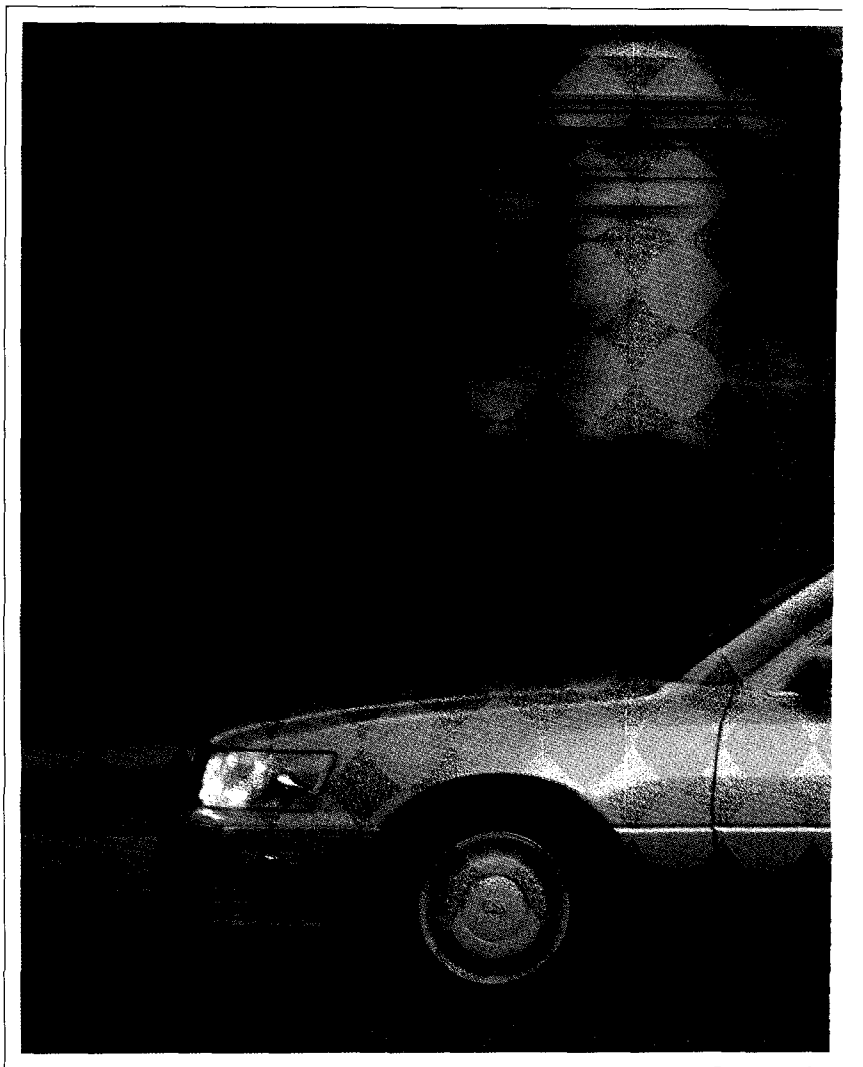

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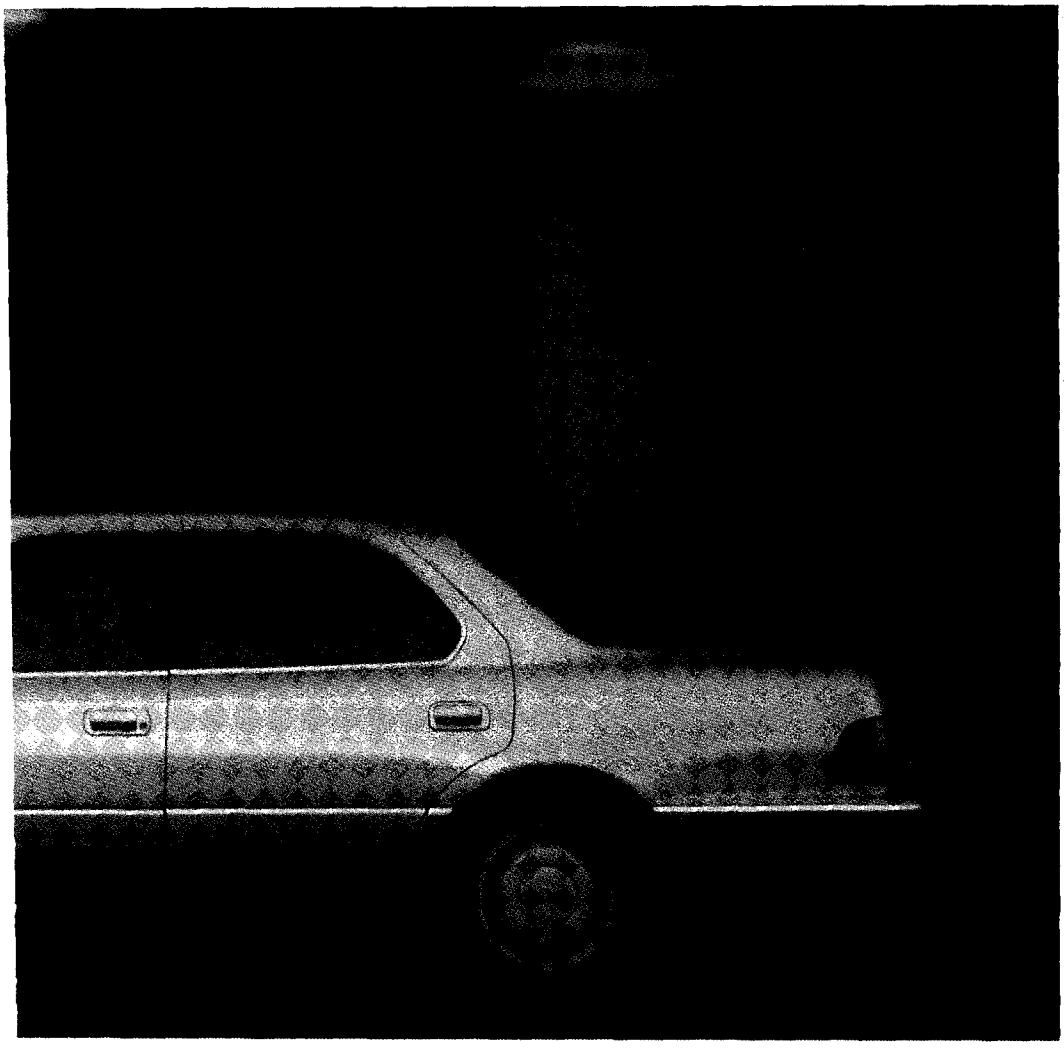

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

angelo. . . . ¶ "Resplendence of the Spanish Monarchy" is a display of sixteenth-century Flemish tapestries, along with German and Italian armor. Through Jan. 5. . . . ¶ A small show of twenty-nine nineteenth-century European photographs, by such artists as Le Gray, Baldus, and Nadar. Through Dec. 1. . . . ¶ "The Lotus Transcendent" is a display of about two hundred small sculptures from Thailand, Cambodia, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Pleasures and Terrors of Domestic Comfort" explores the contemporary photographer's supposed preoccupation with the life of the home in more than a hundred and fifty works by Nan Goldin, William Eggleston, Cindy Sherman, Tina Barney, and others. Through Dec. 31. . . . ¶ "*Dis*locations." Through Jan. 7. . . . ¶ A compact, crisply displayed, quite brilliant installation of masks and helmets—all twentieth-century, most Western—used for sports, medicine, and the exploration of sea and space. Preserving the life of the wearer is the overt function of each of these objects, and ungodly fear is the emotion each seems to express. A must for fashion amateurs and anthropologists alike, this show is a devastating affirmation of our primal nature, and, as such, perhaps the ultimate coda to the museum's own controversial "Primitivism" show of some years back. Through Nov. 19. . . . ¶ An exhibition of drawings, photographs, scale models, and a video presentation related to projects by Tadao Ando, one of Japan's leading architects, who designed this show himself. It's a beautiful but rather chilly mix of two well-known modern Japanese specialties: high-tech corporate production values, and exquisitely rendered, dauntingly pristine structures for life, work, and the spirit—all somehow seen in the abstract. Through Dec. 31. . . . ¶ The annual "New Photography" series presents recent work by Eberhard Grames, Sheron Rupp, and Stephen A. Scheer. Through Jan. 7. . . . ¶ A small show of videotapes made with inexpensive video equipment by such artists as William Wegman, Linda Montano, George Kuchar, and Sadie Benning. Through Nov. 10. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The museum is closed for renovation until early 1992.

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—Unlike most artists who have died of AIDS, Scott Burton, it seems, had enough time to make mature work. This show of the last works he designed, which were fabricated after his death, indicates that this master of functional sculpture was headed in a curious and unanticipated direction. In the post-minimal seventies, Burton cleverly implied a human presence in his exquisite, modernistic sculptures in the form of chairs and tables. These last furniture sculptures are literally figurative: a pair of cherry "Guardian Cabinets" with mirror-like bronze heads, a Chac-Moolesque granite "Bench Goddess," and a stainless-steel "Slave Table" in the form of a crawling man. The sphinxian arrangement of the sculptures here recalls the artist's performance works, and is rich with both childlike fantasy and sadistic suggestion. Through Dec. 8. . . . ¶ "You Connect the Dots. . . ," an oddly academic video installation by Bill Beirne. Through Nov. 10. . . . ¶ "American Life in American Art." Second floor through Nov. 10; third floor through Jan. 5. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Whitney Museum Branches—"Immaterial Objects." The Whitney's permanent collection is particularly strong in the non-traditional works that in many ways defined the aesthetic upheaval of the late sixties and seventies. But owing at least in part to their scale, these important benchmarks are rarely on view. At first it might seem unwieldy to have an exhibition spread out over three locations, but this in fact turns out to be one of this excellent show's strengths. Each venue captures a different perspective. At the Equitable Center (through Dec. 28) are, mostly,

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pieces which are self-contained, calm, and ordered—Mel Bochner's circle of pebbles, a charming conceptual play on literalness and representation, James Turrell's enigmatic light projection, Carl Andre's copper-plate path, Dan Flavin's grid of neon-light tubes, Richard Serra's emphatic black drawing, and even, in a curious way, Eva Hesse's tangle of knotted rope and Richard Tuttle's wrinkled canvas octagon. The installation at Federal Reserve Plaza (through Nov. 16) is, by contrast, alive and animated, and verges, even when ordered, on chaos. Here we find Dennis Oppenheim's mannequin comically lecturing on the systematic murder of the sixties avant-garde; Bruce Nauman's pile of burlap, which is about as concise a protest against formalism as has yet been raised; Barry Le Va's anti-illusionistic scatterings of felt and broken glass; Ree Morton's mixed-media "Signs of Love," a bold feministic parody of sentimentality in art; and Jonathan Borofsky's crowd of running men painted on a wall. In this company, even Robert Irwin's illuminated disk becomes energy unleashed. At Philip Morris (through Nov. 16), Mary Lucier's video installation "Ohio at Giverny" is the best use of this dreary space we have ever seen. (**Whitney Museum at Equitable Center,** Seventh Ave. at 52nd St. Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 11 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 7:30; Saturdays, noon to 5. . . . **Whitney Museum Downtown,** 33 Maiden Lane. Open Mondays through Fridays, 11 to 6. . . . **Whitney Museum at Philip Morris,** Park Ave. at 42nd St. Open Mondays through Saturdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 7:30.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—"Sigmar Polke." In overcompensating for its belated recognition of this major German artist's importance, the American market has come dangerously close to overhyping Polke. This mid-career retrospective, however, despite some big problems—the absence of films, for one—comes as a pleasant surprise. It begins in the mid-sixties, with works that clearly stood in the shadow of contemporaneous American art and were well aware of the fact, often resulting in an essentially good-natured parody of minimal and Conceptual art, which is nevertheless underscored by a certain resignation to their hegemony. There is a bewildering and unexplained ten-year gap, right in the middle of the artist's career (essentially spanning the seventies)—no small hole in a show that covers less than three

Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant

decades. When the exhibition does resume, with early-eighties work, the trickster in Polke returns with a vengeance, teasing with one hand while stroking with the other. From this period come the finest paintings of Polke's career, including the symphonic "Paganini" and the haunting "The Camp"—the latter portraying, by means of two rows of barbed wire with blackness in between, both the concentration camps and the division of Germany. The so-called "mood" paintings of 1982, whose colors shift to reflect changes in the weather, are rich with painterly pathos. And the most recent paintings, from 1988, are quite simply awesome. Through Jan. 5. . . . ¶ "Objects of Myth and Memory." A fascinating exhibition of two hundred and fifty of the nine thousand objects purchased at the beginning of the century by Stewart Culin, the curator responsible for the museum's fine Native American, Asian, and African collections. These objects have not been on view since the thirties. Some of them are exquisite: a group of extraordinary Mimbres stone figures; a charming Zuni fetish in the form of a bear; a number of haunting kachina dolls. But this is more a study of the systematic collection of artifacts and Culin's ethnographic drive than of the cultures themselves, and the works are accompanied by detailed texts about the purchase of many of the objects. What are most engaging are not the treasures, of which there are a number, but the objects of daily life: games, clothes, pots, baskets, belt buckles, rattles, and hats. Through Dec. 29. . . . ¶ A companion show of contemporary Native American works, including ceramics, elk-horn carvings, and Pomo baskets. Through Jan. 27. . . . ¶ A thirty-foot-long platform of forged-iron sculptures is the fifteenth installment in Alain Kirili's "Commandment" series. Through Jan. 5. . . . ¶ "Quattrocento," a small exhibition of a few dozen early-Renaissance panel paintings from Italy. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—"Chiefly Feasts: The Enduring Kwakiutl Potlatch" presents elaborately decorated dishes and bowls, masks, and other objects used in the British Columbian tribe's lavish rituals of hospitality and wealth. . . . ¶ In a "living exhibit," four Tibetan monks will demonstrate over the course of five weeks their ancient craft of doll-making. This involves clay modelling, painting, appliqué, and tailoring, and about twenty elaborate dolls will be made. Through Nov. 8. . . . ¶ A show of photographs by Heinrich Harrer, taken in Tibet during the last few years before the Chinese invasion, in 1951. Through Nov. 8. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St.—A show of sixty ukiyo-e prints and books that explores the relationship between the works, the artists, and censorship in Tokugawa Japan (1615-1868). Through Jan. 5. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6, and Friday evenings until 8; Sundays, noon to 5.)

China Institute, 125 E. 65th St.—"Early Chinese Ceramics from New York State Museums" includes forty-eight earthenware, porcelain, and stoneware objects from around 3500 B.C. to the latter half of the thirteenth century. Through Dec. 14. (Open Mondays through Saturdays, 10 to 5.)

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St.—Sixty-eight early ukiyo-e prints and paintings. Through Nov. 24. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 5.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—The library has reopened with greatly improved interior spaces. The Morgan House (at 37th and Madison) has been purchased and a glass-enclosed garden court constructed to connect the two buildings. The permanent collection is now given three new gallery spaces and is shown off in "Masterpieces of the Morgan Library." Through Jan. 5. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The French children's-book character Babar the Elephant travels to New York in the form of more than a hundred drawings and watercolors by Jean de Brunhoff, the character's creator, and his son Laurent, who has continued the stories. Through Nov. 3. (Open Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admis-

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ART–Cont'd

sion charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—Merlin, Mordred, Gawain, and Galahad leap off the pages and prints of "King Arthur: Looking at the Legend." Through Feb. 22. (Gottesman Exhibition Hall. Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.)... ¶ A hundred and fifty German Expressionist prints and books—mostly from the period 1910-1930—by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Käthe Kollwitz, Wassily Kandinsky, George Grosz, and others. Through Jan. 4. (Third Floor Gallery. Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 7:30; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

Queens Museum of Art, Flushing Meadow Park—"Closet No. 9," by Kenny Scharf, is one of the artist's surreal Day-Glo environments, incorporating paintings, customized appliances, and industrial materials. Through Dec. 20.... ¶ Fifty photographs, by Reginald Marsh, that depict New York's subways and Coney Island, and that were used by the artist as studies for his better-known paintings and drawings. Through Nov. 10.... ¶ Christian Boltanski's mixed-media installation "Les Bougies" ("The Candles") incorporates metal, light fixtures, and mounted photographs. Through Nov. 2.... ¶ "Sylvia Plachy's Unguided Tour" is a collection of a hundred and twenty-five of the photographer's works. Through Nov. 2. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 5.)

Georges Seurat at the Met

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—Sixty-three narrative canvases painted by Jacob Lawrence between 1938 and 1940. Through Nov. 10. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Richmond Burton—New work by this up-and-coming artist, known for his austerely subtle and masterfully textured abstractions, was eagerly anticipated: the buzz was on. It was therefore heartening to find paintings that looked young, between styles, and not really so tasteful after all. With these works, Burton flirts with illusionism and a carnival mood. Most suggest a theatrical setting, with a clunky, rectangular shape resembling a catafalque at each center stage. Their makeup-y colors are mostly in the black-brown-red-pink range, and the strokes look plumpish and wet. Through Nov. 30. (Marks, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Francesco Clemente—Recent paintings—all of them on canvas and most quite small, as many artists' are these days—that are chunkily solid little affairs, though their hothouse atmosphere remains inviolate. An enterprising inventory of breasts, testicles, eyes, mouths, and noses continues to animate Clemente's pullulating, narcissistic, and hermaphroditic beast. Scraped-down reds, terra-cottas, pinks, and blacks dominate the scene here. Through November 16. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

Short List—Jack Bush and **Alfred Maurer**, Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. (open Mondays, through Nov. 9); **Rackstraw Downes**, Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. (open Mondays, through Nov. 16); **Nancy Fried**, Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St. (through Nov. 2); **Cleve Gray**, Berry-Hill, 11 E. 70th St. (open Mondays, through Nov. 9); **Nancy Grossman**, Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St. (through Nov. 9); **Marino Marini**, Kent, 47 E. 63rd St. (open Mondays, closed Saturdays, through Dec. 20); **Reuben Nakian**, Kouros, 23 E. 73rd St. (through Nov. 2); **Bob Thompson**, Vanderwoude Tananbaum, 24 E. 81st St. (through Dec. 14); **Ignacio Zuloaga**, Wildenstein, 19 E. 64th St. (a benefit, admission three dollars; open Mondays, closed Saturdays; through Nov. 8).

GALLERIES—57th STREET AREA

Louise Bourgeois—Though she can be heard clanking around her blast furnace at MOMA, for this show Bourgeois has donned her white gloves. The white and the pink marble pieces with fragments of neoclassical figures—a pair of daintily crossed legs, for example—are, as usual, frozen halfway between rank academicism and a strange sort of campiness. But her hilarious bas-relief of pink breasts, and two Celtic-looking marble-slab monuments with glass suction cups and inner lights—improbable homages to the old-time practice of applying poultices—are powerful and wonderfully peculiar, the two qualities this *commère* knows best. Through Nov. 16. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

Kim MacConnel / Peter Hutchinson—Much of the strength of MacConnel's work—his easygoing, nice-guy touch—worked against him in the eighties, when a muscular, aggressively "male" expressionism dominated. The paintings in this show are his best in many years. Composed of huge postcards and elephantine polka dots, these large works show in amiable fashion the flip side of decoration. The sources of the postcards—and of the hundreds of other small works also on view—were places the artist travelled through in west and central Africa, and the works continue a critique of the colonializing impulses of early modernism that MacConnel and others began two decades ago and that has recently gained greater currency. Of all the artists addressing aesthetic tourism and the appropriation of other cultures, MacConnel has the lightest touch and perhaps the longest reach. / New object-and-text assemblages by an overlooked pioneer of Conceptual art. There is one work for every letter of the alphabet, and they are all very entertaining. "A for Antacid" begins "Avon ate abalone after absconding at alternate altitudes." "Grommets" is particularly appealing. It begins "'Good grief,' Gretchen gasped, 'Gavin gives great gifts.'" Through Nov. 2. (Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Short List—Will Barnet, Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St. (through Nov. 6); **Vanessa Bell** and **Duncan Grant**, Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St. (through Nov. 16); **Paul Brown**, McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. (through Nov. 2); **Pol Bury**, Herstand, 24 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Nov. 9); **Anthony Caro** and **Hans Hofmann**, Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. (through Nov. 16); **Elaine de Kooning**, Washburn, 41 E. 57th St. (through Nov. 2); **Nicola de Maria**, Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. (through Nov. 30); **Edwin Dickinson**, Babcock, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Nov. 8); **Alex Katz**, Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Nov. 2); **Conrad Marca-Relli**, Marisa del Re, 41 E. 57th St. (through Nov. 9); **Rebecca Purdum**, Tilton, 24 W. 57th St. (through Nov. 16); **Harvey Quaytman**, McKee, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Nov. 20); **Lucas Samaras**, Pace, 32 E. 57th St. (through Nov. 30); **James Valerio** (through Nov. 20) and **Luis Cruz Azaceta** (through Dec. 31), Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St.

GALLERIES—SoHo

Matthew Barney—There has been much buzzing about this twenty-four-year-old former J. Crew model, but regardless of the heaps of hype this is one of the more interesting débuts of a young artist in years. The installation centers on a number of abruptly placed objects, such as an exercise mat with leg holders, cast curl bars, a Teflon vaulting pole, and an exercise bench made of hardened petroleum jelly, which is separately housed in a walk-in refrigerator. The objects are scattered throughout the gallery like clues in a search for some futuristic tribal grail, and adding to the hermetic confusion are climber's clips snaking across the ceiling and down a wall to a lower level. Downstairs are two videotapes that help make sense of the installation: they document a privately enacted ritual in which the well-conditioned artist scales the gallery with the fierce drive of a martial-arts master, utilizes the gym equipment, dresses in drag, and engages in other primal practices. Through Nov. 23. (Gladstone, 99 Greene St.)

Ashley Bickerton—In the past few years, this artist has been moving away from the charmingly clever, formalist self-sufficiency of his earlier works, and the results have been mixed. In these new multimedia constructions Bickerton is spinning off into a more personal direction, with snapshots of beaches on the Celebes Sea, bottles of Caribbean rum, and exotically flavored personal ads added to his signature survival imagery of diving equipment, watertight storage canisters, life rafts, and rigging attachments. His is a world of adventurer fantasies colored by a strong survival urge. The issues are interesting, the personality appealing, but the show is as lightweight as the bright-yellow buoys that, in one of the sharper works here, keep afloat a Christian Dior suit. Through Nov. 9. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway.)

Stephen Ellis / Charles Long—A tough grouping of strong nonobjective paintings that owe a debt to Marden and Mondrian. Each of the works is quite different in mood. One, in orange and black, is skillfully deceptive. From afar it looks raw and scratchy, but up close it is a delicate and deliberate fusion of stroke and field. / A group of three strange and engagingly ugly sculptures of anthropomorphic forms covered in pennies, each form having one or two extra limbs. Through Nov. 30. (Koury, 89 Greene St.)

Martin Kippenberger—The artist, a post-Polke bad boy, has derived the work here from a happenstance play on words—in German *Kippenberg* means a mountain of cigarette butts. In the center of the front room here are perfect postmodern confections: seven cast-resin floor lamps (that look like cut glass), filled with matches, cigarette packs, and the like. On the walls are ninety-three small, scratchy doodle drawings that could just as well have been made by kids and that are titled "The Canary Searching for a Port in the Storm." And, in another swipe at the market and its elevation of painting above other mediums, there is a series of deliberately slapdash copies of David Hockney landscapes and interiors. An article about the world-champion German soccer team has been silk-screened over each, and the group is offered as "multiples." Despite Kippenberger's persistent ridiculing of art reverence, the king of Butt Mountain nevertheless betrays an innately aesthetic sensibility. Through Nov. 9. (Nolan, 560 Broadway.)

Liz Larner—An intriguingly severe installation work about a nightmarish, grand-scale loss of identity. It consists of a discoish curved-mirror sculpture hanging in the center of a tin-floored room, with the word "unidentified" painted in gargantuan psychedelic letters on the walls. A heavy metal chain looped several times between a pipe in the gallery's hall and a pipe in a far office suggests an S. & M. relationship between art and business in a harshly graphic way. Through Nov. 16. (303 Gallery, 89 Greene St.)

Alfred Leslie—Five imposing figurative paintings from 1964 to 1968. Three of the works are grisaille paintings of female nudes, and another, of a clothed female figure, is the only remaining canvas from a much larger pivotal group of grisailles that were destroyed in a fire. (The three nudes were made immediately after the fire.) The group marked the artist's full embrace of a reactionary realistic painting technique during the height of Pop and minimalism and in the wake of his own quite skillful forays into Abstract Expressionism. The fifth work is in color, and all five have a haunting, sharply flashlit monumentalism. Through Dec. 21. (Flynn, 113 Crosby St.)

Richard Long—The central work in this show is an exquisite *allée* forty-eight feet long made of broken slabs of reddish-green slate

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propped against one another. It was inspired by a recent walk the artist took in Olympia County, Washington. The over-all effect is that of a violent geological upheaval, and the work conjures images of jagged mountains, cracked ice fields, and bone beds. Also included, on a nearby wall, is one of the artist's energetically executed large mud circles, which establishes a curious male-female juxtaposition. The slate piece is linear and suggests a formation caused by millions of years of natural activity. The mud piece is circular and supple and comes into existence with a moment's precipitation. Through Nov. 16. (Sperone Westwater, 121 Greene St.)

Patty Martori—A series of small, enterable houses lined with pictures that offer a gruesome view of the war between the sexes. There are also several smaller, burned houses, and a "levitating" sheet surrounded by cast-iron dogs whose heads are masked by oversized 'do-rags. Through Nov. 9. (Hearn, 39 Wooster St.)

Ann Messner—The best work yet by an interesting New York sculptor. Messner is at her strongest with near-metaphors, such as a small steel object pierced with pencil-size holes and resting on a bed of red wax. The assemblage looks just enough like a stylized heart to suggest one, while its size and weight make it a perfect weapon. Some of the more enigmatic works are a chair and box that have been electrified—transformed into actual heating elements—for some unspecified purpose, and a group of suitcases coated in milky wax. Through Nov. 16. (Fawbush, 76 Grand St.)

John Miller—Modest-sized, deliberately amateurish paintings of the American Scene, updated somewhat with such oddities as a nuclear reactor, a Tinkertoy construction, a couple at an altar bathed in phosphorescent light, and a K.K.K. meeting. The subjects, inherently loaded with meaning, are presented without rhetoric—this is one of those shows that get stronger and more unsettling as the images accumulate. Through Nov. 9. (Rosen, 130 Prince St.)

Thomas Nozkowski—Small, perfectly pleasant abstract paintings with a taste for the eccentric but without the finesse to express it. Through Nov. 9. (Protetch, 560 Broadway.)

Frank Stella—An exhibition of the artist's signature concentric-square paintings from 1961 to 1974. Though Stella sang many variations on this theme—large canvas, small canvas, thin bands, wide bands—the best ones are the earliest. Particularly appealing is a small 1963 diptych with fat bands, from the collection of Jasper Johns. Through Nov. 16. (RubinSpangle, 395 West Broadway.)

"Devices"—Large thematic shows have been so mediocre lately that this exceedingly clever assortment of works that variously talk, make drawings, spin, and hit you in the neck with a baseball bat, is thoroughly refreshing. Curator Bruce Ferguson has brought together both familiar and unknown objects and drawings with utter ease and delight. He has an eye for the little gem, such as Rebecca Horn's tattered wings made of the pages of Kafka's "Amerika"; the frantically contorted, such as Deborah Whitman's contraption for viewing oneself; the timely untimely, in the form of Ashley Bickerton's machine which clocks its own supposed rising value; and the brilliant shaggy-dog story, in the form of Fischli Weiss' videotaped endless chain reaction. The real curatorial intelligence here resides in the fact that beneath the show's sheer viewer delight there is a serious point: these works speak of breakdown, madness, and a profound much-ado about nothingness. Through Nov. 16. (Baer, 476 Broome St.)

"Plastic Fantastic Lover (object a)"—There is a lot of new information in this gathering of work by twenty-one women, but the show is a mess, and even the interesting pieces pale in the circusy atmosphere. Chief among the hidden treasures, of which there are only a few, is a "painting" by Rosemarie Trockel of five electric-stove burners on a white, baked-enamel surface. The jury is still out on Angela Bulloch's emphatically dumb and gently mesmerizing blue-light plastic bubbles, but a path of colored-paper pom-poms by Polly Apfelbaum is nothing more than cute and stupid. The exhibition is dominated by such gratuitous items as an intricate contraption in which quail eggs are being catalogued and a theatrically fail-safe quartet of exceedingly long purple velvet bathrobes. Through Nov. 15. (Blum Helman Warehouse, 80 Greene St.)

"Le Regole del Gioco (The Rules of the Game)"—A high-spirited show of eight young Italian artists who subvert or criticize the seriousness of "high art." Collectively, the exhibition displays exuberance, vitality, and a coy agnosticism, but few of the young visions hold up individually. Through Nov. 2. (Ala, 560 Broadway.)

Short List—**Carol Anthony**, Davidson, 415 West Broadway (through Nov. 16); **Ida Applebroog**, Feldman, 31 Mercer St. (through Nov. 30); **Ford Beckman**, Shafrazi, 130 Prince St. (through Nov. 30); **Sallie Benton**, First Street Gallery, 560 Broadway (through Nov. 2); **David Diao**, Postmasters, 80 Greene St. (through Nov. 16); **Günter Förg**, Lorence-Monk, 568 Broadway (through Nov. 30); **Anton Henning**, Baghoomian, 555 Broadway (through Nov. 16); **Hughie Lee-Smith**, Kelly, 591 Broadway (through Nov. 5); **Michael Loew**, Pearl, 420 West Broadway (through Nov. 16); **Leo Manso**, Levy, 415 West Broadway (through Nov. 16); **Ed Moses**, Louver, 130 Prince St. (through Nov. 23); **Tony Oursler**, Brown, 23 Watts St. (through Nov. 30); **Giulio Paolini**, Stein-Gladstone, 99 Wooster St. (through Dec. 21); **Barbara Rossi**, Kind, 136 Greene St. (through Nov. 16); **Jesús Rafael Soto**, Humphrey, 594 Broadway (through Nov. 9); **Paul Thek**, Brooke Alexander, 59 Wooster St. (through Nov. 13); **Paul Waldman**, Castelli, 420 West Broadway (through Nov. 16).

OTHER GALLERIES

Short List—**Roz Chast**, Illustration Gallery, 330 E. 11th St. (opens at 1 Tuesdays through Sundays, through Dec. 1); **Tobi Kahn**, Ryan, 452 Columbus Ave., at 81st St. (through Nov. 16); **Brice Marden**, Dia Center for the Arts, 548 W. 22nd St. (opens at noon Thursdays through Sundays, through May 31); **Bill Traylor**, Ricco/Maresca, 105 Hudson St. (through Nov. 9).

Self-portrait by Matthew Rolston

PHOTOGRAPHY

Eve Arnold, the American photographer, who has been living in England since 1961, has just published a collection, titled "The Great British" (Knopf), of photographs taken between 1961 and 1979. Her view here is wide (there are images of the royals, of politicians and political protesters, of actors, of schoolgirls, and of the poor) so the book successfully reflects Arnold's versatility as far as subject matter goes. But within this broad range there are underlying themes—most provocatively, Margaret Thatcher and the United Kingdom in the years before she was elected Prime Minister. Arnold's portraits of Thatcher capture the politician before her iron style got its polish. One of the book's most memorable pictures, which Arnold took in 1977, reflects the photographer's signature wit—in it Mrs. Thatcher, visiting the Orkneys, lackadaisically holds a small wheel of Orkney cheese. Although humor is far from being the only string to Arnold's bow, we've always admired her capacity to create cartoons with her medium, and this book has some real smilers. It also includes a highly readable personal essay by Arnold.

Dike Blair—Color photo-works presented in a soothing installation at the Ealan Wingate gallery. Most of the pieces have as their foundation details of photographs that Blair took at Florida's EPCOT Center. He has blown up the images and covered them in glass, adding paint, computer-generated fractal imagery, and etched lines. In a letter to his gallery, Blair used the question "What is it?" to describe the work. Such mystery is a big part of what he has done with photography, fractals, abstract painting, Disney, and much else. The works are installed in a room that has been painted, carpeted, darkened, Muzaked, and decorated with plants and suburban benches. But the result isn't kitschy: the installation provides the gallery, during its final days, with its own brand of spiritualism. Through Nov. 2. (578 Broadway.)

Peter Campus—Black-and-white digital photographs that are sophisticated computer-enhanced products—sculptural images that balance nature and artifice, the found and the sought, objects and their backgrounds. Campus's images are reminiscent of the tradition of romantic nature photography like that practiced by Ansel Adams, but they also have something Japanese about them. They seem both suspended between cultures and floating in time. Through Nov. 2. (Cooper, 149 Wooster St.)

André Kertész (1894-1985)—The opening show of the former Photofind gallery, in its new location and under a new name. What is striking about this Kertész show, titled "The New York Years, 1936-1985," is the way his images preserve the history of New York. There's an eensy picture from around 1950 that in someone else's hands would be a throwaway: it shows only a wagon wheel, a pigeon, and track-marked snow. Yet the manner in which the three elements come together makes the photo a fragment of time gone by in this city, as soulful as a broken-off piece of ancient statuary. Through Nov. 2. (Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. . . . ¶ A complementary exhibition of vintage prints from 1917 to 1936, taken in Hungary and Paris, is at Houk Friedman, 1094 Madison Ave., at 82nd St. Through Nov. 2.)

Mary Ellen Mark—Mark is a genuinely humane photographer, and her photographs of the effect of poverty on people's lives, and her portraits of individuals who are in confinement for various reasons, are strong because they are all different. She doesn't try to generalize, but instead makes careful and respectful images of individual subjects. Through Nov. 17. (International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

Short List—**Tina Barney**, Borden, 560 Broadway (through Nov. 27); **Robert Capa**, International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. (open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8; through Nov. 17); **William Claxton**, Witkin, 415 West Broadway (through Nov. 30); **Lee Friedlander**, Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. (through Nov. 23); **Annie Leibovitz**, International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8; through Dec. 1); **Joel Meyerowitz**, Danziger, 415 West Broadway (through Nov. 23); **Duane Michals**, Janis, 110 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Nov. 2); **Irving Penn**, Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (through Nov. 30); **Jean Pigozzi**, Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. (through Nov. 15); **Matthew Rolston**, Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway (starts Nov. 2); **Laurie Simmons**, Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St. (through Nov. 16); **Joe Ziolkowski**, Wessel O'Connor, 580 Broadway (through Nov. 2).

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MUSIC

VICTORIAN ENGLAND nearly deified Mendelssohn, and nothing was so sure a trigger for condescension in mid-twentieth-century musical circles as Victorian praise. We grew up with a view of Mendelssohn as a facile, expert, sometimes delightful but limitingly self-satisfied and essentially shallow composer. Self-satisfied he may seem in his letters, which are full of patronizing comments about composers now considered his betters (Berlioz, Chopin). But he was hugely self-critical too, withholding many works from publication, revising them almost obsessively (no carefree note-spinner here), and rejecting some of them after completion with a fierceness of feeling that one would scarcely expect his œuvre to provoke in anyone, admirer or detractor.

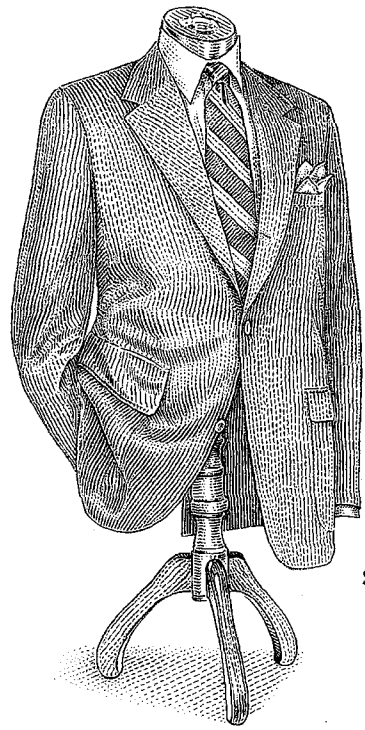
One such rejected piece was the "Reformation" Symphony. (It was known as "No. 5" though composed second in the sequence of his numbered symphonies.) Written to celebrate the tercentenary of the Augsburg Confession, it was delayed when those festivities were cancelled after the revolutionary stirrings of 1830, and was first played in 1832 with the subtitle "Symphony to Celebrate the Church Revolution." Afterward, Mendelssohn withdrew the work, saying he wished he could destroy it. He used two themes with overt Protestant associations, the "Dresden Amen" cadence in the first movement and a serene, simple version of the chorale melody "Ein' feste Burg" in the finale. Under the weight of reverses in the composer's standing, his own rejection of the piece, and the general opprobrium that in some circles has attached to Romantic program music, the "Reformation" Symphony has always had something of a bad press.

To us it seems a beautiful work, thoughtfully and feelingly conceived, touching in the first and last sections and quietly evocative of German scenes in the inner movements. We have no trouble with the idea of a symphony asking us to reflect on Luther's life and ministry, and are moved and impressed by Mendelssohn's habit of serious thinking about the faith his family adopted. The New York Philharmonic, under its new Leipziger music director Kurt Masur, may be developing a Mendelssohn specialty. But the upcoming performances of the "Reformation" Symphony are to be led not by him but by Claus Peter Flor, another conductor close to the German performing tradition of this repertory; we look forward to hearing the piece explored anew.

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall 875-5050; for Avery Fisher Hall 875-5030; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; and for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719.)

OPERA

METROPOLITAN OPERA—L'ELISIR D'AMORE, in a new production, with Kathleen Battle, Luciano Pavarotti, Juan Pons, and Enzo Dara; conducted by Marcello Panni. (Oct. 28 and Nov. 6 at 8 and Nov. 2 at 1:30.) . . . LA FANCIULLA DEL



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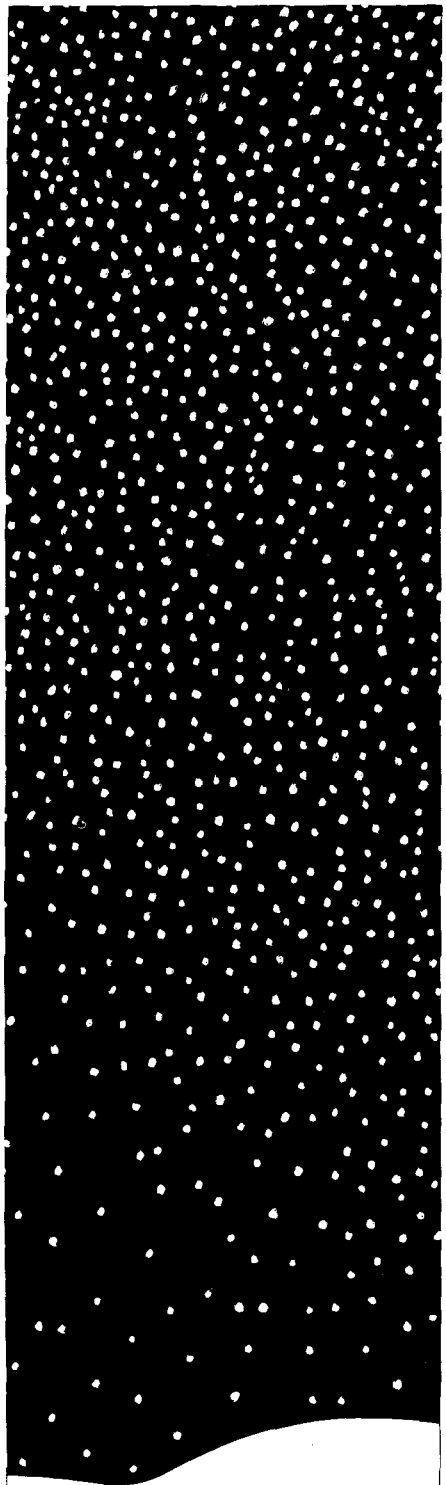

LIFE IS TOO SHORT
AND WINTER IS TOO LONG.

NOT NECESSARILY.

SAGA
MINK
OF SCANDINAVIA

WEST, a new production of Puccini's pistol-packin' "spaghetti Western," with Barbara Daniels, Placido Domingo, and George Fortune; Leonard Slatkin. (Oct. 29 at 8.)... DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE, with Hei-Kyung Hong, Ruth Welting, Jerry Hadley, Håkan Hagegård, and Hans Sotin; Julius Rudel. (Oct. 30 and Nov. 2 at 8.)... With Hei-Kyung Hong, Sharon Christman, Jerry Hadley, Håkan Hagegård, and Hans Sotin; Julius Rudel. (Nov. 5 at 8.)... AIDA, with Aprile Millo, Dolora Zajick, Lando Bartolini, and Timothy Noble; Rico Saccani. (Oct. 31 and Nov. 4 at 8.)... UN BALLO IN MASCHERA, with Leona Mitchell, Sumi Jo, Mignon Dunn, Peter Dvorsky, and Sherrill Milnes; Thomas Fulton. (Nov. 1 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House.)

NEW YORK CITY OPERA—THE MOTHER OF THREE SONS, a new "dance opera" conceived, directed, and choreographed by Bill T. Jones, with music by Leroy Jenkins and a libretto by Ann T. Greene. The performers are Ruby Hinds, Rhodessa Jones, Warren Miller II, Jeffrey McLamb, Leonard Cruz, and Mr. Jones himself. Conducted by William Henry Curry. (Oct. 29 at 8 and Nov. 2 at 2.)... LA TRAVIATA, with Gail Dobish, Michael Rees Davis, and Peter Barcza; Guido Ajmone-Marsan. (Oct. 30 at 8.)... TOSCA, with Edith Davis, Vincenzo Scuderi, and Sigmund Cowan; Steven Sloane. (Oct. 31 at 8.)... DIE SOLDATEN, Bernd Alois Zimmermann's complex, eclectic opera, with a large cast that includes Lisa Saffer, Claudia Cummings, Cynthia Rose, Joyce Castle, Thomas Young, Eugene Perry, Jan Opalach, and Michael Rees Davis; Christopher Keene. (Nov. 1 at 8.)... LA BOHÈME, with Gwynne Geyer, Pamela South, Michael Myers, and Gordon Hawkins; Joseph Colaneri. (Nov. 2 at 8.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

HANDEL'S "ALESSANDRO"—James Richman directs the Concert Royal Baroque Orchestra in a concert version of Handel's 1726 opera (a fanciful interpretation of the life and loves of Alexander the Great); featuring sopranos Julianne Baird and Christine Brandes, and countertenors Drew Minter and Stephen Rickards. (Merkin Concert Hall. Oct. 31 at 8.)

LEE HOIBY OPERAS—See under "Bon Appétit!" in Theatre listings.

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC—At Avery Fisher Hall, Claus Peter Flor conducting. Oct. 29 at 7:30: Shostakovich's Tenth Symphony and Mozart's A-Major Piano Concerto (K. 414), featuring Rudolf Firkušný.... ¶ Oct. 31 at 8, Nov. 1 at 2, and Nov. 5 at 7:30: Mozart's Symphony No. 34, Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 5 (the "Reformation"), and Siegfried Matthus's "Der Wald," a concerto for timpani and orchestra (featuring the Philharmonic's principal timpanist, Roland Kohloff).

MUSICA SACRA—Richard Westenburg directs Mozart's "Coronation" Mass (K. 317) and Haydn's Missa Solemnis in D Major (the "Lord Nelson,"), with soloists that include soprano Marvis Martin. (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 30 at 8.)

NEW YORK POPS—Skitch Henderson conducts a program of spooky stuff for Halloween, featuring soprano Maureen McGovern. (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 31 at 8. Don't be late or the goblins'll getcha.)

ORCHESTRA OF ST. LUKE'S—Roger Norrington conducts an all-Schumann program, consisting of the "Genoveva" Overture, the Cello Concerto (featuring Steven Isserlis), and the Third Symphony (the "Rhenish"). (Avery Fisher Hall. Nov. 1 at 8.)

NATIONAL ORCHESTRAL ASSOCIATION—It's a truism among composers that getting a new composition premièred is a piece of cake compared to securing the work's second performance. Jorge Mester eases the way for four composers—Kamran Ince, Stephen Hartke, Lawrence Rapchak, and Peter Lieuwen—by conducting "second performances" of their compositions. (Carnegie Hall. Nov. 1 at 8.)... NOTE: Members of the audience may remain for a post-concert symposium in which the four works will be considered.

TAFELMUSIK—The Canadian period-instrument orchestra will perform orchestral works by Handel, Telemann, and Rameau, as well as the "Summer" concerto from Vivaldi's "Four Seasons" (in which director Jeanne Lamon will double as violin soloist). (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. Nov. 2 at 8.)

GUILDHALL STRING ENSEMBLE—Robert Salter conducts the eleven-member English string orchestra in works by Purcell and Stravinsky (including his "Apollon Musagète"); and recorder player Michala Petri is featured in concertos by Vivaldi and Sammartini. (Carnegie Hall. Nov. 2 at 8.)

BIRGIT NILSSON CELEBRATION—For the past ten years, avid audiences have competed for seats at the distinguished Swedish soprano's master classes at the Manhattan School of Music. Thirteen singers (many of whom were coached during those sessions) present a benefit concert of operatic highlights in honor of Ms. Nilsson (who will preside as mistress of ceremonies), assisted by a conservatory orchestra, conducted by George Manahan. Singers include Mignon Dunn, Marvis Martin, Johanna Meier, Sherrill Milnes, Dawn Upshaw, and Dolora Zajick. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. 749-2802. Nov. 3 at 5.)

MUSICA VIVA—Walter Klauss directs the chorus and orchestra in works by Purcell and Duruflé (his Requiem). Mezzo-soprano Constance Beavon will be featured in the première of Bruce Saylor's "It Had Wings," based on a short story of the same name by Allan Gurganus, who will be on hand to read his original prose version. In addition, harpist Susan Jolles will join members of the orchestra for Debussy's "Danses Sacrée et Profane." (All Souls Unitarian Church, Lexington Ave. at 80th St. Nov. 3 at 7. For information about tickets, call 535-5530.)

DETROIT SYMPHONY—Neeme Järvi conducts Ives' First Symphony, Arvo Pärt's "Cantus in Memorium Benjamin Britten," and Sibelius' Violin Concerto (with Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg). (Carnegie Hall. Nov. 4 at 8.)

ATLANTIC SYMPHONIETTA—Andrew Schenck conducts Copland's "Music for the Theatre," Barber's First Serenade, and (with narrator Janet Bookspan) the première of Stephen Paulus's "Voices from the Gallery," a suite of eleven movements depicting classic works of art, from the Winged Victory of Samothrace to Grant Wood's "American Gothic" and Picasso's "Goat." (Merkin Concert Hall. Nov. 4 at 8.)

JUPITER SYMPHONY—Jens Nygaard conducts Schubert's Fifth Symphony, Victor Herbert's "Three Character Pieces," and several works by Mozart. (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 4 at 8.)

PRAGUE SYMPHONY—Petr Altrichter conducts the orchestra in Haydn's Symphony No. 96 (the "Miracle") and Dvořák's Symphony No. 6; and Justus Frantz is featured in Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 1. (Carnegie Hall. Nov. 6 at 8.)

RECITALS

MICHIKO TAKAHASHI—Music-lovers who sense their lives are incomplete because they have never heard a contrabass marimba can now ensure that they will go to their graves happily. Ms. Takahashi will concentrate on music composed for that lowest member of the marimba family, a seven-octave contraption which she invented by adding extra segments to a standard bass marimba, and arranging the total sixteen-foot-long expanse in a vast semi-circle. A quartet of collaborating instrumentalists will assist. (Merkin Concert Hall. Oct. 28 at 8.)

AUDUBON STRING QUARTET—Performing music by Mozart, Mendelssohn, Wolf, and Puccini. (Merkin Concert Hall. Oct. 29 at 2.)

JÖRG DEMUS—The Austrian pianist performs two fantasies by Mozart, two sonatas by Beethoven (the E-Minor, Op. 90, and the C-Minor, Op. 111), as well as Schubert's spacious Sonata in B-Flat (D. 960) and a ballade of his own composition. A benefit concert. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. Oct. 29 at 8.)

RIAN DE WAAL—In his New York début recital, the Dutch pianist performs Schubert's "Wanderer" Fantasy and two impromptus, as well as transcriptions by the legendary pianist Leopold Godowsky of music by Schubert and Johann Strauss. (Alice Tully Hall. Oct. 29 at 8.)

MIRELLA FRENI—The soprano performs arias by Verdi, Boito, Catalani, Cilea, and Puccini; assisted by the Orchestra of St. Luke's, with Robert Abbado conducting. (Avery Fisher Hall. Oct. 30 at 8.)

MARIA BACHMANN AND JON KLIBONOFF—The violinist and the pianist, both laureates of the Concert Artists Guild Competitions, perform music by Beethoven, Brahms, Saint-Saëns, and others. (Steinway Hall, 109 W. 57th St. Oct. 30 at 7. For information about

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reservations, which are required, call 333-5200.)

Bargemusic—Presenting chamber music by Mozart, Strauss, and Arensky. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. Oct. 31 at 7:30 and Nov. 3 at 4.)

David Buechner—The pianist performs works by Gershwin: his "Rhapsody in Blue," Second Rhapsody, Preludes, "Improvisations in Foxtrot Style," and (with the assistance of Antoine Zémor) a four-hand arrangement of the "Cuban Overture." (Third Street Music School Settlement, 235 E. 11th St. Nov. 1 at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

Beaux Arts Trio—The ensemble performs Mendelssohn's C-Minor Trio and, with the assistance of violist Steven Tenenbom, Brahms' G-Minor Piano Quartet. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Nov. 1-2 at 8.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—In his first appearances with the Society, pianist Eduardus Halim performs Liszt's "Réminiscences de Don Juan") and is joined by cellist Leslie Parnas for Beethoven's "Variations on 'Bei Männern,' from Mozart's 'Die Zauberflöte.'" Works by Mozart and Colin Matthews—his realization of Mozart's instructions on how to compose by throwing dice—round out the program. (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 1 at 8 and Nov. 3 at 5.)

Mendelssohn String Quartet—The ensemble performs Mendelssohn's Andante and Scherzo, Op. 81, as well as quartets by Tchaikovsky and Ginastera. (Merkin Concert Hall. Nov. 2 at 8.)

Arditti String Quartet—Performing a program of Viennese music that charts the disintegration of tonality: Zemlinsky's Quartet No. 2 (Op. 15), Schoenberg's Quartet No. 4, and Webern's Quartet, Op. 5. (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 3 at 2.)

John Williams—Guitarist, performing an arrangement of a Vivaldi concerto as well as original works by Silvius Leopold Weiss, Villa-Lobos, and others. (Avery Fisher Hall. Nov. 3 at 3.)

Igor Kipnis—Performing selections from Mozart's keyboard music, on the fortepiano. (Wave Hill, 675 W. 252nd St., at Riverdale Ave., the Bronx. Nov. 3 at 3. For information about tickets, call 549-3200.)

Richard Frisch—Baritone, performing Schubert's song-cycle "Die Winterreise," with the assistance of pianist Gerald Ranck. (Ethical Culture Society, 2 W. 64th St. Nov. 3 at 3. No tickets necessary.)

Sequentia—Singers Barbara Thornton and Benjamin Bagby will be joined by string player Rainer Ullreich in speculative interpretations of medieval narratives from France, Spain, and Germany, including a scene from the Old French "Chanson de Roland" and the love-potion scene from Gottfried von Strassburg's thirteenth-century "Tristan." Presented by Music Before 1800. (Corpus Christi Church, W. 121st St., just east of Broadway. 666-0675. Nov. 3 at 4.)

Stephen Drury—The pianist, noted as a champion of new music, performs works by Charles Ives (his "Concord" Sonata), Elliott Carter, John Cage, and John Zorn. (Merkin Concert Hall. Nov. 5 at 8.)

Yo-Yo Ma and Jeffrey Kahane—The cellist and the pianist perform Beethoven's A-Major Sonata, Op. 69; Prokofiev's Sonata, Op. 119; and transcriptions of works by Gershwin (by Jascha Heifetz) and Bernstein (by Mr. Ma). (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. Nov. 6 at 8.)

Four Nations Ensemble—Tenor Paul Elliott joins fortepianist Andrew Appel to perform a group of Schubert songs (his "Gesänge des Harfners," a set of three poems from Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister"), and Beethoven's cycle, "An die ferne Geliebte." The concert also includes chamber music for strings and piano, by Haydn (his "Gypsies Rondo" piano trio, in G Major) and Mozart. (Friends' Meeting House, 15 Rutherford Pl., between 2nd and 3rd Aves. Nov. 6 at 8. For information about tickets, call 1-718 622-3695.)

JAZZ/POP/ROCK PERSONAL APPEARANCES

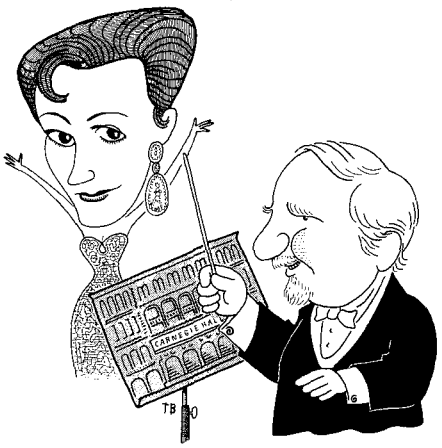
Lenny Kravitz—This derivative, sixties-obsessed rock and roller is a true believer—he actually uses vintage vacuum-tube recording equipment to get closer to that circa-1970 sound, dresses like Hendrix and Sly Stone, and talks like a brainy hippie. The combination of fussy antiquarian and Dionysian primal-screamer drives critics up the wall, but it's one that has clicked with a post-baby-boomer audience. (His recent single, "It Ain't Over 'Til It's Over," nearly made it to No. 1.) At the very least, here's one more chance to wear those retro-psychedelic togs and accessories you may have bought last year. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Oct. 31 at 8.)

James Taylor—Paramount, Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. Oct. 29-30 at 8 and Oct. 31 at 7:30.

Nanci Griffith—Beacon Theatre. Oct. 30 at 8.

Ravi Shankar—With Shubho Shankar and Abhiman Kaushal. (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5050. Oct. 30 at 8.)

Billy Taylor Trio—With Jimmy Owens. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Oct. 31 at 7.)



Maureen McGovern and Skitch Henderson with the New York Pops

C + C Music Factory—Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. Oct. 31 at 8.

BeBe and CeCe Winans—With Margaret Bell and others. (Apollo Theatre, 253 W. 125th St. 864-0372. Nov. 1 at 7 and 11.)

BoDeans—Academy Theatre, 234 W. 43rd St. 307-7171. Nov. 1 at 8.

C + C Music Factory

Urban Dance Squad—Academy Theatre. Nov. 2 at 8.

Natalie Cole—Radio City Music Hall. Nov. 1-3 at 8.

Junko Ueda and Wil Offermans—Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St. 517-2742. Nov. 2 at 8.

Klezmer Conservatory Band—Lehman College Concert Hall, the Bronx. 960-8833. Nov. 3 at 2.

Jimmy Somerville—In a benefit for ACT UP/New York. (Palladium, 126 E. 14th St. Nov. 3 at 10. For information about tickets, call 564-2437.)

Albert Thimann and Ensemble—With Andy Statman. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Nov. 6 at 8.)

Roulette—Oct. 30 at 9 and 11: John Zorn's Cobra, in benefit performances. . . . ¶ Nov. 2 at 9: Borah Bergman. . . . ¶ Nov. 3 at 9: Gisella Frontero. (228 West Broadway. 219-8242.)

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Jets—Vs. the Green Bay Packers, Nov. 3 at 1.

Rangers—Vs. the Minnesota North Stars, Oct. 29. . . . ¶ Vs. the Quebec Nordiques, Oct. 31. . . . ¶ Vs. the Calgary Flames, Nov. 4. . . . ¶ Vs. the Montreal Canadiens, Nov. 6. (Game time, 7:30.)

Islanders—Vs. the San Jose Sharks, Oct. 29. . . . ¶ Vs. the Washington Capitals, Nov. 2. . . . ¶ Vs. the Boston Bruins, Nov. 4. (Game time, 7:35.)

Devils—Away until Nov. 8, when they face the Montreal Canadiens.

(The Jets play at Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands, 1-516 538-6600; the Rangers play at Madison Square Garden, 465-6000; and the Islanders at the Nassau Coliseum, 1-516 794-9300.)

RACING

Horse Racing—At Aqueduct: Daily, except Oct. 29 and Nov. 6, at 12:30. . . . At the Meadowlands: Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. . . . **trotting** at Yonkers Raceway: Weekdays at 8, and Tuesdays at 1.

OTHER EVENTS

New York City Marathon—Twenty-five thousand runners have signed up for this year's event, which starts at 10:45 on Nov. 3, at the toll plaza of the Verrazano Bridge, and ends more than two hours later, near Tavern on the Green in Central Park.

Rodeo—Billed as the "world's toughest." (Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. Nov. 1 at 7:30 and Nov. 2 at 1:30 and 7:30.)

National Horse Show—Circus acts, show jumping, and equitation championships. (Meadowlands Arena. 1-201 935-3900. Oct. 29-Nov. 3.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Halloween—New Yorkers can choose from a horde of celebratory activities guaranteed to demonstrate that in this city costumes are not just kids' stuff. On Oct. 30 at 8, the people at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine are screening "Nosferatu." The organist Lee Erwin will provide musical accompaniment. After the film, there will be a "fifteen-minute spook-out," according to a cathedral spokesperson, in which giant scary figures will emerge from dark corners. Audience members may come as they are or as they aren't. For reservations, call 662-2133. . . . ¶ Everyone is invited to Skyrink (450 W. 33rd St.) on Oct. 31, starting at 6:30, to show off their costumes and skate around. For more information about tickets, call 695-6556. . . . ¶ On Oct. 31 at 7, Theatre for the New City holds its annual dress-up party at 155 First Ave., at 10th St. Attractions include Johnny Colón and his orchestra, palm and tarot-card readers, and the Colorado Sisters, who tell Native American spirit stories. For reservations, call 254-1109. . . . ¶ The nonpareil of Halloween events is the parade in Greenwich Village, which starts this year, on Oct. 31 at 7, at the corner of Sixth Ave. and Spring St. Marchers should arrive about an hour early. Spectators should line the route: Sixth Ave. from Spring St. to 23rd St.

Garrison Keillor—The American Radio Company will be broadcasting live from Symphony Space, on Nov. 2 at 5:45. Guests include Peter Ostroushko and Bob Elliott. (Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.)

A Talk—Oct. 30 at 6:30: Donald Richie talks about Japanese culture. (Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. 752-3015.)

Readings—Nov. 1 at 8: Allan Gurganus (on videotape), Therese Eiben, Heather Lewis, Joan Larkin, and Mary Ann McFadden read from their own works. (Ethical Culture Society, 2 W. 64th St. 875-4124.). . . ¶ Nov. 4 at 8: Roger Straus, Laurie Colwin, Leslie A. Fiedler, James Atlas, Alfred Kazin, and others read and speak in memory of Isaac Bashevis Singer. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440.). . . ¶ Nov. 5 at 7:30: Eavan Boland and Ai read from their own poetry. (Dia Center for the Arts, 155 Mercer St. 431-9232.). . . ¶ Nov. 6 at 6:30: Luc Sante reads from his new book, "Low Life." (New York Bound Bookshop, 50 Rockefeller Plaza. No tickets necessary.)

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

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	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6			

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 28.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: "Resident Alien" (directed by Jonathan Nossiter), with Quentin Crisp.
Theatre 2: "Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Rapture" (Michael Tolkin), with Mimi Rogers.
Theatre 4: "The Commitments" (†).
Theatre 5: Through Oct. 31: "Thousand Pieces of Gold" (Nancy Kelly), with Rosalind Chao, Dennis Dun, Chris Cooper, and Michael Paul Chan. From Nov. 1: "Exposure" (Walter Salles), with Amanda Pays, Peter Coyote, and Tcheky Karyo.
Theatre 6: "Life Is Sweet" (†).

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
Oct. 28: Theatre closed.
Oct. 29-31: "The American Friend" (1977, Wim Wenders; in English, German, and French), with Dennis Hopper and Bruno Ganz.
Nov. 1-3: "Notebook on Cities and Clothes" (1989, Wim Wenders), a documentary; and "Alice in the Cities" (1974, Wim Wenders; in German), with Rudiger Vogeler.
Nov. 4: Theatre closed.
From Nov. 5: "Wings of Desire" (†).

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Curly Sue" (John Hughes), with James Belushi, Kelly Lynch, and Alisan Porter.
Theatre 2: "The Fisher King" (†).
Theatre 3: Through Oct. 31: "Ricochet" (†). From Nov. 1: "29th Street" (George Gallo), with Danny Aiello, Anthony LaPaglia, and Lainie Kazan.

Loews Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)
Theatre 1: "Frankie & Johnny" (†)
Theatre 2: "Dead Again" (†).
Theatre 3: "Whore" (Ken Russell), with Theresa Russell.
Theatre 4: "Frankie & Johnny" (†).
Theatre 5: "Other People's Money" (Norman Jewison), with Danny DeVito.
Theatre 6: Through Oct. 31: "Rambling Rose" (Martha Coolidge), with Laura Dern, Diane Ladd, Lukas Hass, and Robert Duvall. From Nov. 1: "Highlander 2: The Quickening" (Russell Mulcahy), with Christopher Lambert, Virginia Madsen, Michael Ironside, and Sean Connery.
Theatre 7: "House Party 2" (Doug McHenry and George Jackson).

Cinema Village 12th Street, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
A program of films by Henry Jaglom.

Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)
Theatre 1: "Homicide" (David Mamet), with Joe Mantegna.
Theatre 2: Through Oct. 31: "Homicide." From Nov. 1: "Billy Bathgate" (Robert Benton), with Dustin Hoffman, Nicole Kidman, Steven Hill, Loren Dean, and Bruce Willis.
Theatre 3: "Deceived" (†).
Theatre 4: Through Oct. 31: "The Boy Who Cried Bitch" (Juan Jose Campanella). From Nov. 1: "Iron Maze" (Hiroaki Yoshida), with Bridget Fonda, Jeff Fahey, J. T. Walsh, and Hiro Murakami.
Theatre 5: "Antonia and Jane" (Beeban Kidron), with Imelda Staunton and Saskia Reeves.
Theatre 6: Through Oct. 31: "Shattered" (Wolfgang Petersen), with Tom Berenger. From Nov. 1: "Year of the Gun" (John Frankenheimer), with Andrew McCarthy, Valeria Golino, and Sharon Stone.
Theatre 7: "The Story of Boys and Girls" (Pupi Avati, in Italian).

Cinema Village 3rd Avenue, between 12th and 13th. (505-7320)
"Festival of Animation 1991."

Loews 19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: "Little Man Tate" (†).
Theatre 2: "Ricochet" (†).
Theatre 3: "Curly Sue" (John Hughes), with James Belushi, Kelly Lynch, and Alisan Porter.
Theatre 4: "The Butcher's Wife" (Terry Hughes), with Demi Moore and Jeff Daniels.
Theatre 5: "The Fisher King" (†).
Theatre 6: "Two Evil Eyes" (George Romero and Dario Argento), with Harvey Keitel.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Twenty-One" (Don Boyd), with Patsy Kensit.

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
Through Oct. 31: "Rambling Rose" (Martha Coolidge), with Laura Dern, Diane Ladd, Lukas Hass, and Robert Duvall.
From Nov. 1: "Highlander 2: The Quickening" (Russell Mulcahy), with Christopher Lambert, Virginia Madsen, Michael Ironside, and Sean Connery.

Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Theatre 1: Through Oct. 31: "Deceived" (†). From Nov. 1: "The People Under the Stairs" (Wes Craven), with Brandon Adams, Everett McGill, Wendy Robie, and A. J. Langer.
Theatre 2: Through Oct. 31: "Dead Again" (†). From Nov. 1: "Billy Bathgate" (Robert Benton), with Dustin Hoffman, Nicole Kidman, Steven Hill, Loren Dean, and Bruce Willis.
Theatre 3: Through Oct. 31: "Shattered" (Wolfgang Petersen), with Tom Berenger. From Nov. 1: "Year of the Gun" (John Frankenheimer), with Andrew McCarthy, Valeria Golino, and Sharon Stone.
Theatre 4: Through Oct. 31: "Paradise" (Mary Agnes Donoghue), with Melanie Griffith, Don Johnson, and Elijah Wood. From Nov. 1: "Iron Maze" (Hiroaki Yoshida), with Bridget Fonda, Jeff Fahey, J. T. Walsh, and Hiro Murakami.

At Theatre 80 St. Marks, Jules Dassin's "Rififi"

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Other People's Money" (Norman Jewison), with Danny DeVito.
Theatre 2: "Frankie & Johnny" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Butcher's Wife" (Terry Hughes), with Demi Moore and Jeff Daniels.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"The Hitman" (Aaron Norris), with Chuck Norris, Michael Parks, Alberta Watson, and Al Waxman.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Ricochet" (†).

Sutton 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: Through Oct. 31: "Shattered" (Wolfgang Petersen), with Tom Berenger. From Nov. 1: "Year of the Gun" (John Frankenheimer), with Andrew McCarthy, Valeria Golino, and Sharon Stone.
Theatre 2: Through Oct. 31: "Twenty-One" (Don Boyd), with Patsy Kensit. From Nov. 1: "Iron Maze" (Hiroaki Yoshida), with Bridget Fonda, Jeff Fahey, J. T. Walsh, and Hiro Murakami.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
Through Oct. 31: "Barton Fink" (†).
From Nov. 1: "29th Street" (George Gallo), with Danny Aiello, Anthony LaPaglia, and Lainie Kazan.

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"My Own Private Idaho" (†).

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "The Hitman" (Aaron Norris), with Chuck Norris, Michael Parks, Alberta Watson, and Al Waxman.
Theatre 2: "House Party 2" (Doug McHenry and George Jackson).

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
Through Oct. 31: "Rambling Rose" (Martha Coolidge), with Laura Dern, Diane Ladd, Lukas Hass, and Robert Duvall.
From Nov. 1: "Highlander 2: The Quickening" (Russell Mulcahy), with Christopher Lambert, Virginia Madsen, Michael Ironside, and Sean Connery.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Get Back" (Richard Lester), with Paul McCartney.
Theatre 2: "The Butcher's Wife" (Terry Hughes), with Demi Moore and Jeff Daniels.

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: Through Oct. 31: "Antonia and Jane" (Beeban Kidron), with Imelda Staunton and Saskia Reeves. From Nov. 1: "Billy Bathgate" (Robert Benton), with Dustin Hoffman, Nicole Kidman, Steven Hill, Loren Dean, and Bruce Willis.
Theatre 2: "Deceived" (†).
Theatre 3: "Paradise" (Mary Agnes Donoghue), with Melanie Griffith, Don Johnson, and Elijah Wood.

Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "The Fisher King" (†).
Theatre 2: "Curly Sue" (John Hughes), with James Belushi, Kelly Lynch, and Alisan Porter.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
Through Oct. 29: "The Commitments" (†).
From Oct. 30: "Black Robe" (Bruce Beresford), with Lothaire Bluteau.

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Frankie & Johnny" (†).
Theatre 2: "Little Man Tate" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Homicide" (David Mamet), with Joe Mantegna.

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Other People's Money" (Norman Jewison), with Danny DeVito.

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Frankie & Johnny"(†).

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: "House Party 2" (Doug McHenry and George Jackson).
Theatre 2: Through Oct. 31: "The Hitman" (Aaron Norris), with Chuck Norris, Michael Parks, Alberta Watson, and Al Waxman. From Nov. 1: "The People Under the Stairs" (Wes Craven).

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "The Butcher's Wife" (Terry Hughes), with Demi Moore and Jeff Daniels.
Theatre 2: "Deceived" (†).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: Through Oct. 29: "The Cry of the Owl" (1987, directed by Claude Chabrol; in French). From Oct. 30: "The Architecture of Doom" (1989, Peter Cohen; in German), a documentary.
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: Through Oct. 31: "Black Lizard" (†). From Nov. 1: "The Wages of Fear" (1953, Henri-Georges Clouzot; in French), with Yves Montand, Charles Vanel, Folco Lulli, and Peter Van Eyck.

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "My Own Private Idaho" (†).
Theatre 2: "My Own Private Idaho" (†).

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MOVIE HOUSES–Cont'd

8TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)
"The Hitman" (Aaron Norris), with Chuck Norris, Michael Parks, Alberta Watson, and Al Waxman.

ART GREENWICH TWIN, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "The Butcher's Wife" (Terry Hughes), with Demi Moore and Jeff Daniels.
Theatre 2: Through Oct. 31: "Two Evil Eyes" (George Romero and Dario Argento), with Harvey Keitel. From Nov. 1: "The People Under the Stairs" (Wes Craven).

QUAD CINEMA, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Slacker" (†).
Theatre 2: (Separate admissions) "My Mother's Castle" (Yves Robert, in French), with Julien Ciamaca; and "My Father's Glory" (Robert, in French), with Ciamaca.
Theatre 3: "La Maison Assassin" (George Lautner, in French).
Theatre 4: "Paris Is Burning" (†).

CHELSEA CINEMAS, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "Deceived" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Oct. 31: "Paradise" (Mary Agnes Donoghue), with Melanie Griffith, Don Johnson, and Elijah Wood. From Nov. 1: "Billy Bathgate" (Robert Benton), with Dustin Hoffman, Nicole Kidman, Steven Hill, Loren Dean, and Bruce Willis.
Theatre 3: "City of Hope" (John Sayles), with Vincent Spano, Tony Lo Bianco, Joe Morton, Barbara Williams, and Sayles.
Theatre 4: "Homicide" (David Mamet), with Joe Mantegna.
Theatre 5: "Frankie & Johnny" (†).
Theatre 6: "The Commitments" (†).
Theatre 7: "Other People's Money" (Norman Jewison), with Danny DeVito.
Theatre 8: Through Oct. 31: "Shattered" (Wolfgang Petersen), with Tom Berenger. From Nov. 1: "Highlander 2: The Quickening" (Russell Mulcahy), with Christopher Lambert, Virginia Madsen, Michael Ironside, and Sean Connery.
Theatre 9: Through Oct. 31: "The Super" (†). From Nov. 1: "29th Street" (George Gallo), with Danny Aiello, Anthony LaPaglia, and Lainie Kazan.

23RD ST. WEST TRIPLEX, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "The Hitman" (Aaron Norris), with Chuck Norris, Michael Parks, Alberta Watson, and Al Waxman.
Theatre 2: "House Party 2" (Doug McHenry and George Jackson).
Theatre 3: Through Oct. 31: "House Party 2." From Nov. 1: "The People Under the Stairs" (Wes Craven).

GUILD, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"The Butcher's Wife" (Terry Hughes), with Demi Moore and Jeff Daniels.

WORLDWIDE CINEMAS, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: Through Oct. 31: (Separate admissions) "Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare" (Rachel Talalay), with Robert Englund; and "Suburban Commando" (Burt Kennedy), with Hulk Hogan, Christopher Lloyd, and Shelley Duvall. From Nov. 1: "The People Under the Stairs" (Wes Craven).
Theatre 2: "Two Evil Eyes" (George Romero and Dario Argento), with Harvey Keitel.
Theatre 3: "The Fisher King" (†).
Theatre 4: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (†).
Theatre 5: "Whore" (Ken Russell), with Theresa Russell.
Theatre 6: Through Oct. 31: "Necessary Roughness" (Stan Dragoti), with Scott Bakula. From Nov. 1: "Iron Maze" (Hiroaki Yoshida), with Bridget Fonda, Jeff Fahey, J. T. Walsh, and Hiro Murakami.

ZIEGFELD, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"The Commitments" (†).

LOEWS FESTIVAL, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Dead Again" (†).

57TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
Through Oct. 31: "The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe" (†).
From Nov. 1: "Exposure" (Walter Salles), with Amanda Pays, Peter Coyote, and Tcheky Karyo.

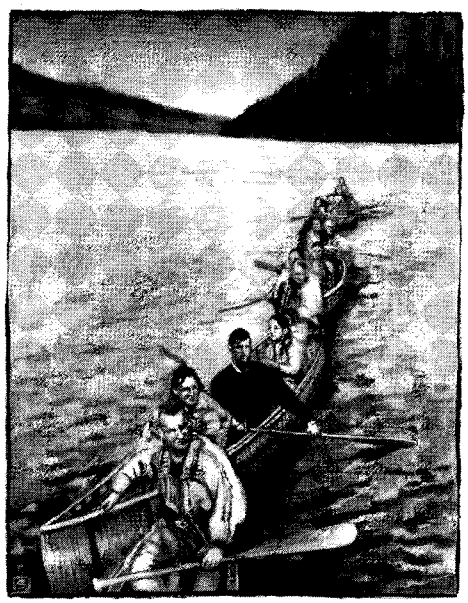
CARNEGIE HALL CINEMAS, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Theatre 1: "Barton Fink" (†).
Theatre 2: "Barton Fink" (†).

LOEWS FINE ARTS, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
"The Man in the Moon" (Robert Mulligan), with Sam Waterston, Tess Harper, and Gail Strickland.

CINEMA 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"The Rapture" (Michael Tolkin), with Mimi Rogers.

LOEWS PARAMOUNT, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"The Butcher's Wife" (Terry Hughes), with Demi Moore and Jeff Daniels.

62ND & BROADWAY, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
Through Oct. 31: "Shattered" (Wolfgang Petersen), with Tom Berenger.
From Nov. 1: "Year of the Gun" (John Frankenheimer), with Valeria Golino, and Andrew McCarthy, Sharon Stone.



At the Beekman, "Black Robe"

LINCOLN PLAZA 1, 2, AND 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "City of Hope" (John Sayles), with Vincent Spano, Tony Lo Bianco, Joe Morton, Barbara Williams, and Sayles.
Theatre 2: "Europa Europa" (†).
Theatre 3: "La Belle Noiseuse" (Jacques Rivette, in French), with Michel Piccoli, Emmanuelle Béart, and Jane Birkin.

REGENCY, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
Through Oct. 31: "Rambling Rose" (Martha Coolidge), with Laura Dern, Diane Ladd, Lukas Hass, and Robert Duvall.
From Nov. 1: "29th Street" (George Gallo), with Danny Aiello, Anthony LaPaglia, and Lainie Kazan.

LOEWS 84TH STREET SIXPLEX, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: Through Oct. 31: "Ricochet" (†). From Nov. 1: "Billy Bathgate" (Robert Benton), with Dustin Hoffman, Nicole Kidman, Steven Hill, Loren Dean, and Bruce Willis.
Theatre 2: "The Fisher King" (†).
Theatre 3: "Other People's Money" (Norman Jewison), with Danny DeVito.
Theatre 4: "Curly Sue" (John Hughes), with James Belushi, Kelly Lynch, and Alisan Porter.
Theatre 5: "Little Man Tate" (†).
Theatre 6: "Frankie & Johnny" (†).

METRO CINEMA 1 AND 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: Through Oct. 31: "House Party 2" (Doug McHenry and George Jackson). From Nov. 1: "The People Under the Stairs" (Wes Craven), with Brandon Adams, Everett McGill, Wendy Robie, and A. J. Langer.
Theatre 2: Through Oct. 31: "House Party 2." From Nov. 1: "Highlander 2: The Quickening" (Russell Mulcahy), with Christopher Lambert, Virginia Madsen, Michael Ironside, and Sean Connery.

OLYMPIA I AND II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Two Evil Eyes" (George Romero and Dario Argento), with Harvey Keitel.
Theatre 2: "The Hitman" (Aaron Norris), with Chuck Norris, Michael Parks, Alberta Watson, and Al Waxman.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

CRITERION CENTER, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "House Party 2" (directed by Doug McHenry and George Jackson).
Theatre 2: "Curly Sue" (John Hughes), with James Belushi, Kelly Lynch, and Alisan Porter.
Theatre 3: "Other People's Money" (Norman Jewison), with Danny DeVito.
Theatre 4: "Ricochet" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Super" (†).
Theatre 6: "House Party 2."

EMBASSY I, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
Through Oct. 31: "Little Man Tate" (†).
From Nov. 1: "Billy Bathgate" (Robert Benton), with Dustin Hoffman, Nicole Kidman, Steven Hill, Loren Dean, and Bruce Willis.

EMBASSY 2, 3, AND 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 1: "Deceived" (†).
Theatre 2: "Dead Again" (†).
Theatre 3: Through Oct. 31: "Ernest Scared Stupid" (John Cherry), with Jim Varney. From Nov. 1: "Little Man Tate" (†).

LOEWS ASTOR PLAZA, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Frankie & Johnny" (†).

NATIONAL TWIN, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: Through Oct. 31: "Shattered" (Wolfgang Petersen), with Tom Berenger. From Nov. 1: "Highlander 2: The Quickening" (Russell Mulcahy), with Christopher Lambert, Virginia Madsen, Michael Ironside, and Sean Connery.
Theatre 2: Through Oct. 31: "The Hitman" (Aaron Norris), with Chuck Norris, Michael Parks, Alberta Watson, and Al Waxman. From Nov. 1: "The People Under the Stairs" (Wes Craven), with Brandon Adams, Everett McGill, Wendy Robie, and A. J. Langer.

WEST SIDE CINEMA 1 AND 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)
Theatre 1: "Showdown in Little Tokyo" (Mark L. Lester), with Dolph Lundgren and Brandon Lee.
Theatre 2: "Boyz N the Hood" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

FILM FORUM 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Through Oct. 31: "The Wages of Fear" (1953, directed by Henri-Georges Clouzot; in French), with Yves Montand, Charles Vanel, Folco Lulli, and Peter Van Eyck.
From Nov. 1: "Lucky Star" (†).

THEATRE 80 ST. MARKS, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
Oct. 28: "La Femme Infidèle" (1969, Claude Chabrol; in French), with Stéphane Audran, Michel Bouquet, Michel Duchaussoy, and Maurice Ronet; and "This Man Must Die" (1969, Chabrol; in French), with Duchaussoy and Jean Yanne.
Oct. 29: "The Manchurian Candidate" (1962, John Frankenheimer), with Frank Sinatra, Laurence Harvey, Janet Leigh, Angela Lansbury, and James Gregory; and "On the Beach" (1959, Stanley Kramer), with Gregory Peck, Ava Gardner, Anthony Perkins, and Fred Astaire.
Oct. 30: "Scarface" (1932, Howard Hawks), with Paul Muni; and "Hell's Angels" (1930, Howard Hughes), with Ben Lyon, James Hall, and Jean Harlow.
Oct. 31: "Blood Simple" (†) and "Raising Arizona" (†).
Nov. 1-2: "Annie Hall" (1977, Woody Allen), with Allen and Diane Keaton; and "Manhattan" (1979, Allen), with Allen, Keaton, Michael Murphy, and Meryl Streep.
Nov. 3: "Foreign Correspondent" (1940, Alfred Hitchcock), with Joel McCrea, Laraine Day, and George Sanders; and "Saboteur" (1942, Hitchcock), with Priscilla Lane, Robert Cummings, and Otto Kruger.
Nov. 4: "Rififi" (1955, Jules Dassin; in French), with Jean Servais; and "Shoot the Piano Player" (1960, François Truffaut; in French), with Charles Aznavour.
Nov. 5: "Lenny" (†); and "Janis" (1975), a documentary about Janis Joplin.
Nov. 6: "The Red House" (1947, Delmer Daves), with Edward G. Robinson, Lon McCallister, and Judith Anderson; and "D.O.A." (1950, Rudolph Maté), with Edmond O'Brien.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)—Oct. 28 at 2:30: "Bread, Love, and Dreams" (1953, directed by Luigi Comencini; in Italian), with Vittorio De Sica, Gina Lollobrigida, and Marisa Merlini. . . . ¶ Oct. 28 at 3: "Across the Pacific" (1942, John Huston), with Humphrey Bogart, Mary Astor, and Sydney Greenstreet. . . . ¶ Oct. 28 at 6: Episodes from four films, in Italian, directed by or with De Sica. . . . ¶ Oct. 28 at 6:30: "Queen of Diamonds" (1990, Nina Menkes). . . . ¶ Oct. 29 at 2:30 and Oct. 31 at 6: "Too Bad

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MOVIE HOUSES–Cont'd

She's Bad" (1955, Alessandro Blasetti; in Italian), with Sophia Loren, De Sica, and Marcello Mastroianni. . . . ¶ Oct. 29 at 3 and 6: "The Cherry Orchard" (1991, Shun Nakahara; in Japanese). . . . ¶ Oct. 29 at 6 and Oct. 31 at 2:30: "The Earrings of Madame de ..." (1953, Max Ophuls; in French), with Charles Boyer, Danielle Darrieux, and De Sica. . . . ¶ Oct. 31 at 3 and 6: "The Blank Point" (1990, Xiao-Yen Wang), a documentary. . . . ¶ Nov. 1 at noon and Nov. 3 at 5: "After the Fox" (†). . . . ¶ Nov. 1 at 2:30 and Nov. 3 at noon: "Il Segno di Venere" (1955, Dino Risi; in Italian), with De Sica, Loren, and Alberto Sordi. . . . ¶ Nov. 1 at 3 and 6: Animated films from the Pinschewer studio. . . . ¶ Nov. 1 at 6 and Nov. 3 at 2:30: "Two Women" (†). . . . ¶ Nov. 2 at noon and Nov. 5 at 2:30: "Amore e Chiacchiere" (1956, Alessandro Blasetti; in Italian), with De Sica and Gino Cervi. . . . ¶ Nov. 2 at 2:30 and Nov. 5 at noon: "Il Boom" (1963, De Sica; in Italian), with Sordi and Gianna Maria Canale. . . . ¶ Nov. 2-3 at 2:30 and 5, Nov. 4 at 3, and Nov. 5 at 6: Three different programs of Swiss animated films, 1972-1991. . . . ¶ Nov. 2 at 5 and Nov. 4 at 2:30: "Il Giudizio Universale" (1961, De Sica; in Italian), with De Sica, Sordi, and Silvana Magnano. . . . ¶ Nov. 4 at 6: "Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow" (1964, De Sica; in Italian), with Loren and Mastroianni. . . . ¶ Nov. 4 at 6:30: A program of films by Larry Jordan, who will be present. . . . ¶ Nov. 5 at 6: "General della Rovere" (†).

Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5181)— Oct. 30 at 8 and 10: "Senseless" (1962) and "The Flower Thief" (1960), both by Ron Rice. . . . ¶ Oct. 31 at 8: "The Queen of Sheba Meets the Atom Man" (1963 and 1982, Rice). . . . ¶ Nov. 1-2 at 6:30 and Nov. 3 at 4:30: "Losing Control?" (1991, Gary Krane). . . . ¶ Nov. 1-3 at 8: Three different programs of short films by Larry Jordan. . . . ¶ Nov. 1 at 10: "Kinoglaz" (1925, Dziga Vertov). . . . ¶ Nov. 2 at 4:30 and 10: "Shagai, Soviet" (1926, Vertov). . . . ¶ Nov. 3 at 6 and 10: "A Sixth of the World" (1926, Vertov). . . . ¶ Nov. 6 at 6: "The Eleventh Year" (1928, Vertov). . . . ¶ Nov. 6 at 8: "Masala" (1991, Srinivas Krishan). . . . ¶ Nov. 6 at 10: "Plastic Jesus" (1971, Lazar Stojanovic).

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015)— Oct. 31 at 6:30: Four recent experimental films from the Image Forum Collection, introduced by film critic Donald Richie.

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—Nov. 6 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Bob le Flambeur" (1955, Jean-Pierre Melville; in French), with Isabel Corey and Roger Duchesne.

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718-784-0077)— Nov. 2 at 2: "The Travelling Players" (1975, Theo Angelopoulos; in Greek), with Eva Kotamanidou, Aliki Georgouli, and Maria Vasiliou. The film is two hundred and thirty minutes long, with one intermission. . . . ¶ Nov. 3 at 2: "Pericles in America" (1988, John Cohen), with Pericles Halkias.

Symphony Space, B'way at 95th St. (864-5400)—Nov. 4 at 7:30: "Once Upon a Time in the West" (1968, Sergio Leone), with Henry Fonda, Claudia Cardinale, Jason Robards, and Charles Bronson.

Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., State Office Building, 163 W. 125th St. (873-5040)—Oct. 31 at 6:30: "Abby" (1974, William Girdler), with Carol Speed, William Marshall, Terry Carter, Austin Stoker, and Juanita Moore; and "Death by Temptation" (1990, James Bond III).

Museum of Television and Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. (621-6800)—Selections from Jack Benny's appearances on his own weekly television show and in specials. Showings Tuesdays and Wednesdays at noon and 4, Thursdays and Fridays at noon, 4, and 6, and Saturdays and Sundays at noon and 4.

92nd Street Y, Lexington at 92nd St. (996-1100)—Oct. 30 at 7:45: "Stranger Than Paradise" (Jim Jarmusch), with John Lurie, Eszter Balint, and Richard Edson. Mr. Jarmusch will be present.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow.)

After the Fox (1966)—An international collaboration that turned into a box-office calamity, yet, for a messy satirical farce, this picture has a surprising number of funny moments. Neil Simon and Cesare Zavattini wrote the screenplay about a crook who pretends to be a moviemaker. Vittorio De Sica directed, and the cast includes Peter Sellers as the crook, his then-wife, Britt Ekland, playing his sister, Martin Balsam, Victor Mature (who parodies himself and earns the biggest laughs), Paolo Stoppa, Akim Tamiroff, and De Sica himself. The score is by Burt Bacharach.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Nov. 1 and Nov. 3.)

Barton Fink—The Coen brothers' macabre comedy about a blocked writer in 1941 Hollywood is densely packed with allusions, clever dialogue, ingenious visual jokes, startling plot twists, and imaginative atmospheric effects, yet it feels thin. It's an empty tour de force, and what's dismaying about the picture is that the filmmakers (Joel Coen directed, Ethan Coen produced, and they wrote the script together) seem inordinately pleased with its hermetic meaninglessness. Fink (John Turturro), the protagonist, is a left-wing New York playwright—obviously based on Clifford Odets—who signs a contract to write screenplays in Hollywood. His first assignment is a wrestling picture for Wallace Beery. He can't get started on it: he sits in his seedy, depressing hotel room, stares at the typewriter, and feels defeated. The Coens treat this emblematic figure of thirties culture with merciless contempt. They quickly expose him as a phony, a buffoon, and a talentless hack, and then spend the rest of the movie punishing him. The picture is designed to visit ever more grotesque indignities on a character who's pitiful from the outset; there's not much fun in that. And there's no fun at all in Turturro's hyperactive performance: the way he plays this leftist intellectual, the movie might as well have been called "The Nutty Pinko." The Coens' interests are purely academic, and their prankish formalism becomes very irritating in the course of the picture. Also with John Goodman, Michael Lerner, John Mahoney, Judy Davis, and Tony Shalhoub. The movie won awards for best picture, best director, and best actor (Turturro) at the 1991 Cannes Film Festival.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 9/9/91.) (Carnegie Hall Cinemas. . . . ¶ Gotham Cinema; through Oct. 31.)

Black Lizard (1968)—Was Yukio Mishima a fan of the early, funny Woody Allen? This gaudy film version of his seriously decadent stage drama (based on a detective novel by Edogawa Rampo) plays like his answer to "What's Up, Tiger Lily?" It's no more than a curiosity, but not an idle one. Female impersonator Akihiro Maruyama is the distaff jewel thief of the title, who, as a sideline, robs human beauties of their souls and turns them into statues. The movie is swinging sixties trash with dash, filmed in "Shochiku GrandScope" and color that might have leaked out of a yo-yo factory. The director, Kinji Fukasaku, is a hype-happy hack, and the hero, supposedly Japan's top sleuth (played by Isao Kimura), is distinctly unmemorable. But the closing sequence is ripest camp, with Mishima himself showing up as one of the antiheroine's once-living dolls, a man so masculine that his hair won't stop growing even when he's in suspended animation. Written by Masashige Narusawa. In Japanese.—M.S. (Film Forum; through Oct. 31.)

Blood Simple (1985)—This splatter-movie art movie was directed by Joel Cohen, who wrote the screenplay with his brother Ethan, who was the producer; they made the film independently, but it's a Hollywood by-product. A Texas roadhouse owner (Dan Hedaya) wants to have his young wife (Frances McDormand) and her lover (John Getz) murdered; he hires a killer, a good-ol'-boy private detective (M. Emmet Walsh) who takes his money and double-crosses him. The one real novelty in the conception is that the audience has a God's-eye view of who is doing what to whom, while the characters have a blinkered view and, misinterpreting what they see, sometimes take totally inexpedient action. Joel Coen doesn't know what to do with the actors (they give their words too much deliberation and weight), but he knows how to place the characters and the props in the film frame in a way that makes the audience feel knowing and in on the joke. His style is deadpan and klutzy, and he uses the klutziness as his trump card. It's how he gets his laughs—the audience enjoys not having to take things seriously. The film provides a visually sophisticated form of gross-out humor; the material is thin, though, and there isn't enough suspense until about the last ten minutes, when the action is so grisly that is has a kick. M. Emmet Walsh is the only colorful performer; he lays on the loathsomeness, but he gives it a little twirl—a sportiness. The grimy, lurid cinematography is by Barry Sonnenfeld. With Samm-Art Williams.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Oct. 31.)

Boyz N the Hood—The writer and director, John Singleton, is a twenty-three-year-old graduate of the U.S.C. film school. This movie, his first, is a classically constructed—and therefore rather predictable—coming-of-age drama about young black men growing up on the mean streets of south-central Los Angeles. The picture conveys a vivid sense of the dangers, both physical and emotional, of day-to-day existence in this ravaged urban environment. It's a war zone, and its inhabitants—the people on the front lines—mostly don't have the luxury of planning long-range survival strategies: they're too busy reacting to the immediate, unremitting daily threats. Singleton's evocation of real people's struggles to find some measure of peace and sanity in these grim urban circumstances is heartfelt and often moving, and the movie provides a welcome corrective to the dehumanizing sensationalism of the local-news version of inner-city life. But the young filmmaker's professionalism and precocious self-assurance sometimes work against his best instincts. Singleton's plot is disappointingly conventional; it obeys screenwriting-class rules. The experience he's dealing with here deserves something more than the tidy dramatic structure that he has imposed on it. We get glimpses of what the movie might have been in the complex, magnetic performance of Ice Cube, a rap star (formerly of N.W.A.), who plays a neighborhood gangster type named Doughboy. Also with Cuba Gooding, Jr., Larry Fishburne, Nia Long, Tyra Ferrell, and Angela Bassett.—T.R. (West Side Cinema.)

The Commitments—Alan Parker's film is a loose, friendly musical comedy about the brief career of an Irish soul band. The Commitments are the brainchild of an energetic young music enthusiast named Jimmy Rabbitte (Robert Arkins), who lives in a poor Dublin neighborhood. He puts together a ten-piece group that learns, eventually, to play precise and spirited versions of soul classics in the Memphis style. The music of the Commitments isn't original, but that doesn't prevent it from being enormously entertaining: the band's hard-won proficiency charms us. Parker concentrates on the day-to-day details of rehearsals and performances; he seems to revel in the complexity of the group's musical, emotional, and sexual interactions, and he does full comic justice to the petty irritations of life in a band. What holds the Commitments together is a combination of Jimmy's ingenuity, their common pleasure in making music, and the daily challenge of responding to their fellow band members' provocations with quick, profane humor. The kids' verbal sparring is another kind of music—maybe the true sound of Dublin soul. Until the last half hour, when the direction gets a little pushy, the picture has an offhand, unassuming grace. Most of the Commitments are played by young Dublin musicians who answered a casting-call advertisement. They're a vivacious and spontaneous crew. The screenplay is by Dick Clement, Ian La Frenais, and Roddy Doyle,

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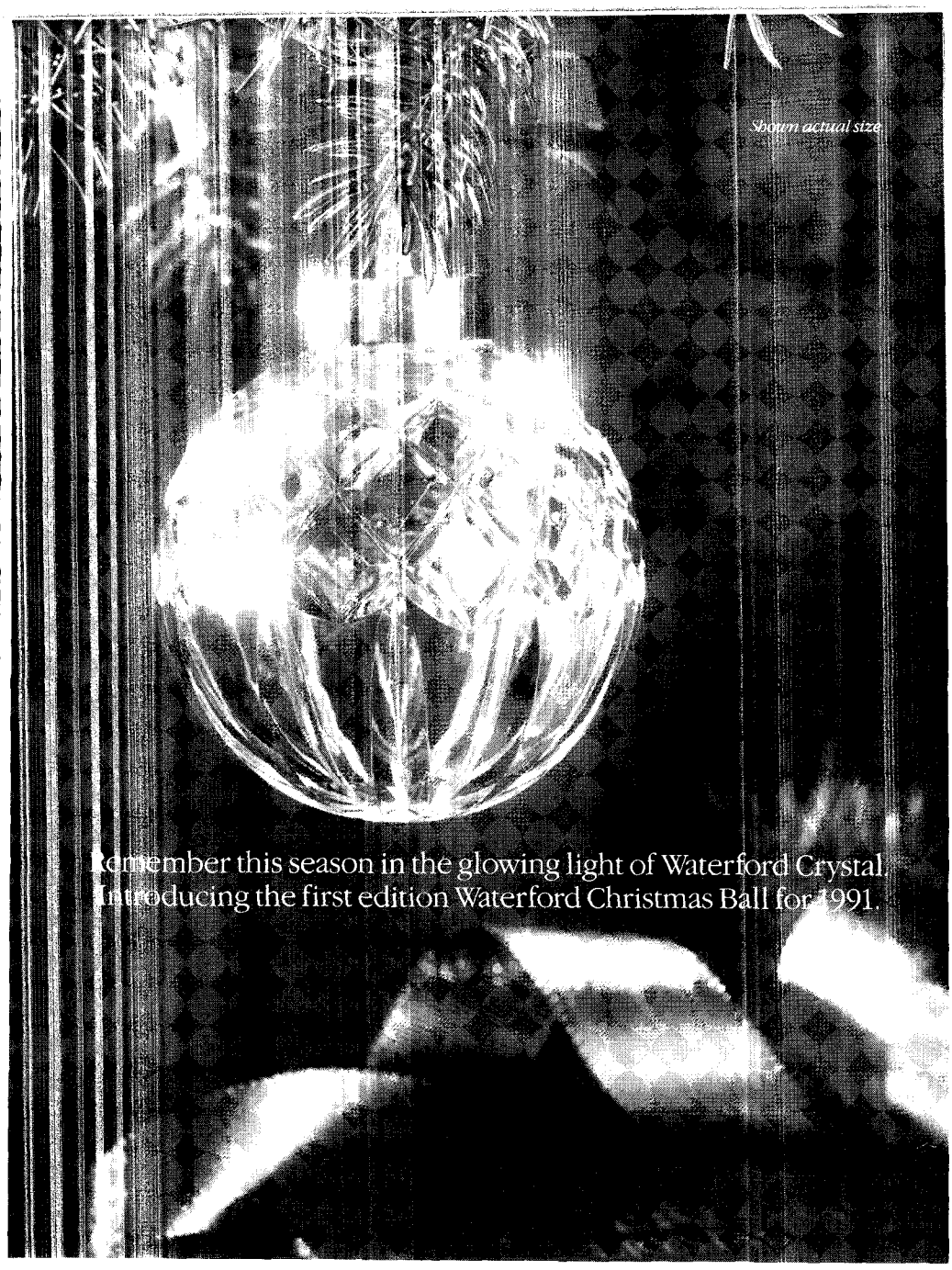
from Doyle's novel. The songs are great—chosen, with unusual intelligence, from the repertoires of Otis Redding, Aretha Franklin, Wilson Pickett, and other soul giants.—T.R. (8/26/91) (Angelika Film Center, Chelsea Cinemas, and Ziegfeld.... ¶ Beekman; through Oct. 29.)

Dead Again—This murder mystery, directed by Kenneth Branagh from a wildly complicated screenplay by Scott Frank, wears its inanity on its sleeve. It shuttles breezily between the present day, in which an L.A. detective named Mike Church (Branagh) is trying to discover the identity of an attractive amnesiac (Emma Thompson), and the late forties, in which a European composer and conductor (also Branagh) may or may not have murdered his pianist wife (also Thompson). These stories are, of course, connected: the amnesiac might even be a reincarnation of the conductor's wife, stabbed to death with a pair of scissors forty years earlier. Branagh makes no attempt to disguise the script's preposterousness. He revels in it, both as actor and as director. The mood of the picture is both frivolous and spooky, and the suspense often seems a function of sheer giddiness: as the movie dances, with drunken insouciance, toward the simultaneous climaxes of its two stories, the tension we feel is partly fear that Branagh won't be able to maintain his precarious balance. Finally, the picture does come crashing down. When it's time to wrap up the mystery, the movie leaves too many of the plot's enigmas unresolved, and Branagh's insouciance loses its charm. Also with Derek Jacobi, Andy Garcia, Hanna Schygulla, and (in a hilarious cameo) Robin Williams.—T.R. (9/9/91) (Loews Village Theatre VII, Loews Festival, and Embassy.... ¶ Murray Hill Cinemas; through Oct. 31.)

Deceived—Goldie Hawn gives her most emotional performance in years as a wife who suspects her husband (John Heard) of philandering, chicanery, and worse. Hawn's maturity is less a revelation than a delayed proof of the gifts her fans have known she's been keeping under wraps. When she expresses her doubts, anxieties, and sexual quaverings, her empathic and comic powers intensify. The film is only half a good thriller. It's tense and involving when the heroine is figuring out her husband's real identity. Then she makes one dumb move after another. As she loses her poise, the plot loses its sense. Still, the director, Damian Harris, does a smooth job of navigating the action's fresh antique-art milieu, and there's a funny parody scene of kiddie-whipped adults. Mary Agnes Donoghue and Derek Saunders wrote the script, from a story by Donoghue.—M.S. (Village East Cinemas, Cinema II, 86th Street East Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, and Embassy.... ¶ Murray Hill Cinemas; through Oct. 31.)

Europa Europa—This superb film by the Polish director Agnieszka Holland is based on the memoirs of Salomon Perel, a German Jew who spent much of the Second World War passing for Aryan in an élite Hitler Youth academy. The movie dramatizes this almost inconceivable survival story with a surprisingly light touch. It bounds from one jaw-dropping episode to the next with the speed and the unnerving neutrality of a picaresque adventure, and never pauses to judge its ambiguous hero; it's content to let the ironies of his situation collect around him like reflections in dressing-room mirrors. His family's flight from the Nazis begins in 1938, on the eve of his bar mitzvah. Solly (played by a remarkable young actor, Marco Hofschneider) lands first in Lodz, Poland, and then in the Soviet Union, where he becomes a star pupil in a Communist school. After the Wehrmacht invades Russia and takes him prisoner, he reincarnates himself as an orphaned "pure" German, an Aryan child wandering in the barbaric eastern wilderness. By the time he is initiated into the Hitler Youth, he has already run through several identities, and has proved himself capable of playing his roles with conviction and enthusiasm. We remain, however, constantly aware (as he is) of what his Nazi disguise conceals—his circumcised penis, the irreversible and unambiguous sign of his identity as a Jew. Holland uses this physical evidence of Solly's Jewishness as the fulcrum of the movie's delicately balanced narrative and moral tensions. Also with Julie Delpy, Andre Wilms, Halina Labonarska, and Rene Hofschneider. The real Salomon Perel ap-



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IN BRIEF–Cont'd

pears, as himself, in the movie's final scene. In German and Russian.—T.R. (7/1/91) (Lincoln Plaza.)

The Fisher King—This one-hundred-and-thirty-seven-minute endurance test is the story of a former New York City "shock jock" (Jeff Bridges) who befriends a schizoid former medievalist (Robin Williams) and joins his quest for the Holy Grail. The gonzo filigree of the director, Terry Gilliam, surrounds this fable of redemption with pseudo-originality. The allusion-mongering of the writer, Richard LaGravenese, gives it delusions of grandeur. At heart, the film is no different from a whole string of Hollywood movies centering on mysterious madmen who may be legendary heroes. As usual for this drippy kind of film, Williams' throwback character, Parry—short for Parsifal—is supposed to inspire everybody with his virtuous whimsies. But Gilliam doesn't know how to give the fantasy any sentimental charm, and he's hell on the actors, including Mercedes Ruehl as Bridges' earthy lover and Amanda Plummer as Williams' gawky amorous ideal. They mug; Gilliam takes mug shots. The movie is a peculiarly irritating failure—a leaden piece of uplift.—M.S. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Loews 19th Street East 6, Gemini, Worldwide Cinemas, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

Frankie & Johnny—The movie version of Terrence McNally's 1987 play "Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune" is a sweet-tempered romantic comedy whose main characters are a New York coffee-shop waitress, Frankie (Michelle Pfeiffer), and a short-order cook, Johnny (Al Pacino). McNally, adapting his two-character play for the screen, has expanded and drastically rearranged his original story. He and the director, Garry Marshall, have attempted to place Frankie and Johnny in a variety of settings, to stretch the narrative out over a longer period, to surround the lovers with lots of other people—and to incorporate all this extra material without dissipating the emotional tensions of the main characters' relationship. Although the new characters and settings sometimes give the movie the feel of a sitcom, the filmmakers keep the basic principles of romantic comedy in view, and the stars' performances elevate the material. Pacino brings out the comedy and the ambiguity of a middle-aged man's sense of emotional rebirth: he's exuberant, touching, and a little scary. And Pfeiffer is extraordinary; her Frankie is a superbly detailed rendering of a woman with a fanatically conservative heart. The strength of the play was its simplicity and its directness; the movie preserves those qualities by telling the story in the ordinary, straightforward Hollywood manner. This is a vehicle for Pacino and Pfeiffer, and they're more glamorous than the characters they're playing, but, in a weird way, their star power is perfectly appropriate here: it's the meat-and-potatoes stuff of big-budget movie entertainment. Kate Nelligan and Nathan Lane are standouts in a large supporting cast, which also includes Hector Elizondo and Jane Morris.—T.R. (10/21/91) (Loews Village Theatre VII, Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, U. A. East, Chelsea Cinemas, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Loews Astor Plaza.)

General della Rovere (1959)—Vittorio De Sica has perhaps his greatest role in this otherwise mediocre film, directed by Roberto Rossellini. It is set in Genoa in 1943. De Sica is a small-time swindler with a classic con man's grand manner; the Germans induce him to impersonate a Resistance general whom they have inadvertently shot, and send him to a political prison, where he is supposed to ferret out information for them. But the petty, self-loathing crook, experiencing for the first time the respect and admiration—even the awe—of other men, becomes as courageous as the fighter he impersonates. The mask has molded the man, and the Nazis must destroy their own creation. De Sica is superb; we watch his evolution from worm to Il Generale with utter astonishment and delight. At the most original, the film is a shockingly funny black comedy: the con man, battered and bleeding from torture, weeps sentimentally over a photograph of the real Generale's children—a scene as excruciatingly comic as the surreal torture scenes of "Bend Sinister," Nabokov's novel about the Nazis. But this film, made on a slender budget and shot and edited in six weeks, is—surprisingly—too long; the director doesn't seem to have discovered his best material until it was too late to pull the story together. The compositions, the groupings of actors, the ideas, and the milieu are like a reprise of the neo-realist "Open City" (1945). The rawness and immediacy are gone, though; the faces are actorish, and the sets are obviously set. With Hannes Messemer, Sandra Milo, Giovanna Ralli, and Anne Vernon. From a script by Sergio Amidei, Diego Fabbri, Indro Montanelli, and Rossellini. In Italian.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Nov. 5.)

Lenny (1974)—This earnest Bob Fosse film starring Dustin Hoffman is for those who want to believe that Lenny Bruce was a saintly gadfly who was martyred only because he lived before *their* time. Working from a weak script by Julian Barry, Fosse accepts the view that Bruce's motivating force was to cleanse society of hypocrisy, and, having swallowed that, he can only defuse Bruce's humor. So when you hear Hoffman doing Bruce's shticks you don't even feel like laughing. Despite the fluent editing and the close-in documentary techniques and the sophisticated graphics, the picture is a later version of the one-to-one correlation of an artists's life and his art which we used to get in movies about painters and songwriters. Hoffman makes a serious, honorable try, but his Lenny is a nice boy. Lenny Bruce was uncompromisingly not nice; the movie turns a teasing, seductive hipster into a putz. As Honey, Valerie Perrine does a dazzling strip and gives an affecting, if limited, performance. With Gary Morton, Jan Miner, and Stanley Beck.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Nov. 5.)

Life Is Sweet—With Alison Steadman, Jim Broadbent, Claire Skinner, Joan Horrocks, and Timothy Spall; directed by Mike Leigh. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Angelika Film Center.)

Little Man Tate—Fred Tate (Adam Hann-Byrd) is a seven-year-old intellectual prodigy who lives with his single, working-class mother, Dede (Jodie Foster). The screenplay, by Scott Frank, presents the young hero as one unhappy whiz kid: Fred's public-school education doesn't challenge him, and his classmates treat him like a freak. Nobody comes to his birthday party. The picture (which was directed by Foster) is frustrating, because it seems reluctant to explore with any rigor the special problems that a boy like Fred might have. The filmmakers keep falling back on pathos and on the easy irony that the main character is, despite his extraordinary gifts, an ordinary boy with the normal emotional needs of any seven-year-old. By the end of the movie, his precocious intelligence has lost its distinctive qualities, and he's no more than an exotic variant of a standard type: the lonely, misunderstood kid who yearns for love and acceptance. Our interest in Fred actually diminishes in the course of the picture; Frank and Foster introduce a unique hero and then spend two hours stripping him of his individuality. Also with Dianne Wiest, David Pierce, P. J. Ochlan, and Harry Connick, Jr.—T.R. (Loews 19th Street East 6, Loews New York Twin, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex. . . . ¶ Embassy 1; through Oct. 31. . . . ¶ Embassy; starting Nov. 1.)

My Own Private Idaho—The third feature by the independent filmmaker Gus Van Sant ("Mala Noche," "Drugstore Cowboy") is like an exploded version of the previous two, and it scatters meanings all over the landscape. It's a beautiful disaster, like a bomb test in the middle of nowhere. The movie is set primarily in Van Sant's familiar territory—the seedier parts of Portland, Oregon—and its main characters are a pair of young hustlers, Mike (River Phoenix) and Scott (Keanu Reeves), who sell their bodies on the street. Mike is a narcoleptic: every time he blacks out, he has lyrical dreams composed of imagery from his childhood. Scott, who is the son of Portland's mayor, is modelled on Shakespeare's Prince Hal; the Falstaff character here is a scruffy gay cokehead called Bob (William Richert), and his scenes with Scott are stylized variations of incidents from both parts of "Henry IV" (hence also variations on Orson Welles' "Chimes at Midnight"). Van Sant takes a lot of chances, and visually the movie is so imaginative, so fiercely alive, that it carries us along. But when the over-all design of the picture becomes clear, we feel cheated rather than enlightened. Scott turns into a villain; Bob is ennobled as a symbol of outlaw freedom; and Mike takes on the aura of a holy fool, the Prince Myshkin of the Portland meat market. Van Sant's vision is disappointingly trite and schematic. Phoenix, however, gives a superbly intelligent and intuitive performance. The original screenplay is by Van Sant. Eric Alan Edwards and John Campbell did the cinematography.—T.R. (10/7/91) (Plaza, and Waverly.)

Paris Is Burning—Jennie Livingston's documentary about gay black and Latino men who compete in drag balls is a beautiful piece of work—lively, intelligent, exploratory. The drag queens we see here seem to be holding up a mirror to the world of the empowered as they see it in movies, TV shows, and magazines. In the ballroom, some present themselves as elegant, glamorous women in designer outfits, and walk with the hip-swinging slouch of runway models, while others adopt more mundane personas: college students (of both sexes); military men; Wall Street businessmen; aristocrats at play, dressed for yachting or riding to hounds. The criteria by which all these turns are judged is verisimilitude—"realness." The material is almost too rich, too suggestive. Everything about the ball culture signifies so blatantly and so promiscuously that the movie induces a kind of semiotic daze. Livingston is smart enough not to reduce her subjects to the sum of their possible meanings, perhaps because she realizes that the way the drag performers manipulate image and fetishes and the iconography of popular culture is for many of them a sophisticated form of humor. The most self-aware of the gay men in this picture revel in the ironies of their social and sexual identities, and Livingston makes us appreciate the comic grace and the strange wisdom of that approach. Like all the best documentary filmmakers, she does her subjects the honor of allowing them to retain some of their mystery. Edited by Jonathan Oppenheim.—T.R. (3/25/91) (Quad Cinema.)

Raising Arizona (1987)—This broad farce is no big deal, but it has a corn-pone-surreal quality and a rambunctious charm. It's about baby love—about people who feel they can't live without an infant to cuddle. When Edwina, or Ed—played by Holly Hunter—discovers she can't have a child, she's a wreck until she hears about male quintuplets that have been born to a woman who took fertility drugs; then she torments her husband, Hi (Nicolas Cage), until he goes to steal one of them. As soon as Hi plunks a quint into her arms, she yowls, "I love him so much!" Hi and Ed live in a yellow mobile home in a Tempe, Arizona, trailer park at the edge of a Pop-art version of the desert. Everything in the film is warped and flipped out; the light seems fluorescent, as if the world were a twenty-four-hour supermarket. Joel and Ethan Coen, who did the writing together—Joel directed and Ethan produced (with Mark Silverman)—have a knack for hick-suburban dialogue (it's backed up by banjos and, sometimes, a yodeller). And the film is storyboarded like a comic strip; it has a galumphing tempo. With John Goodman and William Forsythe as the escaped-convict brothers who become gaga over the babe, Trey Wilson as the quints' hardheaded father, Randall (Tex) Cobb as the hiker, and Frances McDormand and Sam McMurray. Cinematography by Barry Sonnenfeld.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Oct. 31.)

Ricochet—A black political figure on the rise is suddenly tagged in public as a sexual sleazebag. "The Clarence Thomas Story"? No, just the latest shock schlock from director Russell Mulcahy ("Highlander" films), with Denzel Washington as a cop-turned-assistant-D.A. and John Lithgow as the vengeful, psychopathic hit man who'll stop at nothing to frame him. Extremism can be fun, but not when it's as calculated, sadistic, and nonsensical as it is here; the two stars bring slumming to new pits. Washington has the more amusing and unpredictable turn as a man willing to push the edge of the legal envelope. But the hero's innocence and eventual triumph are never in doubt: Justice Thomas, eat your heart out. Steven E. de Souza wrote the script, from a story by Fred Dekker and Menno Meyjes.—M.S. (Loews 19th Street East 6, Eastside Cinema, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Movieland 8th Street Triplex, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex; through Oct. 31.)

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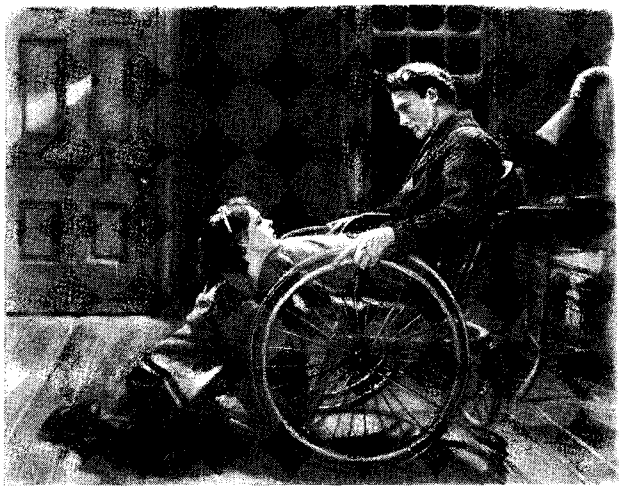
The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe—Trudy, a crazy bag lady, has taken upon herself the task of showing visiting extraterrestrials the variety of life on earth. She has an umbrella hat that picks up signals from everywhere and turns her into a living TV set, with lots of channels and great reception. She's played by Lily Tomlin, and every person whose life flashes onto Trudy's psychic screen is played by Lily Tomlin, too. Tomlin gives us a clear, sharp picture every time: she's a high-definition actress. This astonishing one-woman show, presented on Broadway in 1985, was written for Tomlin by her longtime collabotator Jane Wagner. The belated film version, directed by John Bailey, adds some distracting visual effects, but it mostly does justice to the extraordinary talents of these women. Nothing interferes with the dazzling rhythm of Tomlin's performance, and the piece is constructed so that its themes build up an inexorable momentum. The characters who flash across the screen turn out, in the end, to be connected to each other in ways we couldn't have anticipated. And it's immensely gratifying to see all the different personalities gathered together in one woman. This is probably the only solo theatrical performance that truly deserves to be called democratic.—T.R. (10/7/91) (57th St. Playhouse; through Oct. 31.)

Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll—A one-man show in which Eric Bogosian plays, in succession, ten characters, none of whom interact with or refer to any of the others; each inhabits his own eerily self-contained world. The surprising thing about this acting tour de force is that its radically disparate parts really add up to something: in rock-and-roll terms, it's a concept album, not just a collection of singles. This picture, directed (erratically) by John McNaughton, was filmed in concert-movie style, with multiple cameras and before a paying crowd, and Bogosian looks relaxed and confident. In the past, his performances often felt desperate, coercive; he seems more willing now to allow the audience some freedom in responding to his characters. There's a real progression in the course of the film, from characters who provoke immediate, visceral reactions to characters whose effect on us is more ambiguous. Bogosian warms us up with surefire stuff to prepare us for the riskier, more demanding material in the final part of the show. His last three monologues are the funniest in the movie—probably the finest work he has ever done.—T.R. (9/23/91) (Angelika Film Center.)

Slacker—There is no joy in Austin—at least not in the seedy collegiate neighborhood of Richard Linklater's enervating piece of local colorlessness. There's precious little originality, either, despite the resolute nonconformity of Linklater's neo-beatnik characters. Each follows the familiar beat of a different bongo. Sociopaths, Elvis, the J.F.K. assassination, the Lincoln Brigade, Madonna—the same topics come up off campus in Austin as in Cambridge, Mass., or Madison. What's worse, the sophomoric surrealism of the slackers' dialogue is all that Linklater gives you to hang onto. With dozens of one-shot characters who take over for a scene, then pass the baton to the next no-brain, the structure begs comparison to Buñuel's late black comedies, like "The Phantom of Liberty." But watching this movie is more like being stranded in the switchboard of a nightmare party line. It's tempting to call the film a straightfaced satire, but that would give it too much credit. There's nothing inside Linklater's deadpan.—M.S. (Quad Cinema.)

The Super—The worst kind of in-your-face farce. Joe Pesci stars as a slumlord sentenced to a hundred and twenty days in his own dilapidated tenement while he corrects housing violations. Rubén Blades and Kenny Blank co-star as the tenants who do the most to redeem him, while Vincent Gardenia goes volcanically over the top as Pesci's avaricious father. Underneath the scabrous class and racial humor, Sam Simon's script is supposed to convey a heartwarming message: that in a multicultural atmosphere even a scum can clean up his act and learn to love his fellowman. But it's a non-stop screech of a movie, with Pesci butting up against the other performers like an angry base runner in an argument at home plate. That effect is particularly unsettling when he's making a play for the lovely, too-little-seen Madolyn Smith Osborne, as the housing-authority counsel who puts him away. Rod Daniel directed.—M.S. (Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Chelsea Cinemas; through Oct. 31.)



Janet Gaynor and Charles Farrell in "Lucky Star"

"Lucky Star" is the most unusual kind of lost film—it got found in its purest form. This 1929 rural melodrama, directed by Frank Borzage and starring Janet Gaynor and Charles Farrell, premièred in New York as a part-talkie and was soon forgotten. But in 1990 a print of the all-silent version, originally released in Europe and the hinterlands, turned up at a Dutch archive (the Netherlands Film Museum, in Amsterdam). It played to applause at film festivals and is now at the Film Forum.

The non-talking "Lucky Star" is a beautifully wrought curio, so fablelike and timeless it might have emerged from a magic box instead of a time capsule. Gaynor is a tough, needy farm gal and Farrell is a power lineman who returns from the First World War without the use of his legs. Their romance illustrates love's power to heal harsh or busted lives. Borzage and his scenarist, Sonya Levien, aren't shy about making that point. The action builds to a mawkish, histrionic climax, but the filmmakers accumulate such good will that the operatics aren't fatal. The set design and cinematography blend the raw and the cooked-up—they achieve a backwoods storybook splendor. And Borzage is wizardly with his performers. He roughs up Gaynor at the beginning, accentuating her slyness and selfishness, then lets the actress's gamine charm emerge softly and coltishly. Borzage establishes Farrell as a two-fisted guy, then emphasizes his dreamy qualities when he turns into a wheelchair-bound Mr. Fixit. Both of them have the glow that comes from emotion, not just lighting. When Farrell washes Gaynor's hair with eggs, Borzage and his cast conjure a feeling of sweet foolishness. The Borzage of "Lucky Star," who involves you in his characters' play of hands, is the same artist who called forth Gary Cooper's best performance in another First World War drama, "A Farewell to Arms."

Terminator 2: Judgment Day—The killer cyborg who was played by Arnold Schwarzenegger in the original "Terminator" (1984) has returned—only this time he's the hero. The first film, which was written and directed by James Cameron, is one of the genre-movie classics of the eighties: a lean, witty science-fiction movie without great pretensions to significance. The sequel, also written (with William Wisher) and directed by Cameron, is far less satisfying. The picture is full of spectacular action sequences and dazzling special effects, but the narrative doesn't have the snap of the original's: it's lumbering and monotonous, and it carries a heavy-handed anti-nuke message. The old, Schwarzenegger-model Terminator (the T-800) has been superseded by a more advanced model, the T-1000 (Robert Patrick), who is sleeker and more versatile. T-800, who represented the ultimate in destructive technology in the first film, seems almost human here: compared to T-1000, he's a vulnerable guy (or guyoid). The whole movie is based on the insane conceit that Arnold Schwarzenegger is the *underdog*. That's a stretch. Also with Linda Hamilton, Edward Furlong, and Joe Morton. Effects by Stan Winston and many, many others.—T.R. (7/29/91) (Worldwide Cinemas.)

Two Women (1960)—There isn't much conviction in this movie. It's a commercial, warmed-over Vittorio De Sica–Cesare Zavattini collaboration, but probably more people went to see it than ever went to see their finest films—"Shoeshine," "Miracle in Milan," or "Umberto D"—or even their most famous one, "The Bicycle Thief." The chief attraction here is Sophia Loren, deglamourized, playing an Anna Magnani role—a woman in wartime who can't save herself or her daughter from rape. There's nothing to mark the picture as a work by De Sica, except perhaps that this man so gifted at calling up great performances from nonprofessionals has worked his magic and almost made Loren appear to be a great professional. The film scholar Mira Liehm has suggested that "the film became what 'Bicycle Thief' might have become if Cary Grant had played the role of the unemployed Roman worker." The Nazis, the Russians, and the Moors all seem to be planted for the sake of the plot; Loren's lusty affair with Raf Vallone is coy; the intellectual played by Jean-Paul Belmondo is a tired conception; and the daughter (Eleanora Brown) is written to be pale and standard. Based on a novel by Alberto Moravia. In Italian.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Nov. 1 and Nov. 3.)

Wings of Desire (1987)—The director, Wim Wenders, who wrote the script with the collaboration of Peter Handke, had a theme: in an approximation of Rilke's words, "Joy has gone astray." We're told that "when the child was a child," stories held together. Now all we have is fragmentation, entropy. Two angels—Damiel (Bruno Ganz) and Cassiel (Otto Sanders)—hover over the bleak, divided city and move among the forlorn Berliners, listening to what's in their minds: listening to the questions about existence that these people ask themselves. Our overhearing what the angels hear—the thoughts chanted on the track, all in even, quiet tones, as grayed out as the sunless skies—works on us like a tranquillizer. The dim whimsy, the recitations of prose poetry that recall the Beats—it all produces a blissed-out stupor that feels vaguely avant-garde. Eventually, Damiel falls in love with a beautiful French aerialist (Solveig Dommartin), and gives up his wings. With Peter Falk, who brings some funky warmth to the role of an American movie star, and Curt Bois as a sad-faced old man called Homer. The cinematography (tinted black-and-white, and color) is by Henri Alekan. In English, French, and German.—P.K. (Public Theatre; starting Nov. 5.)

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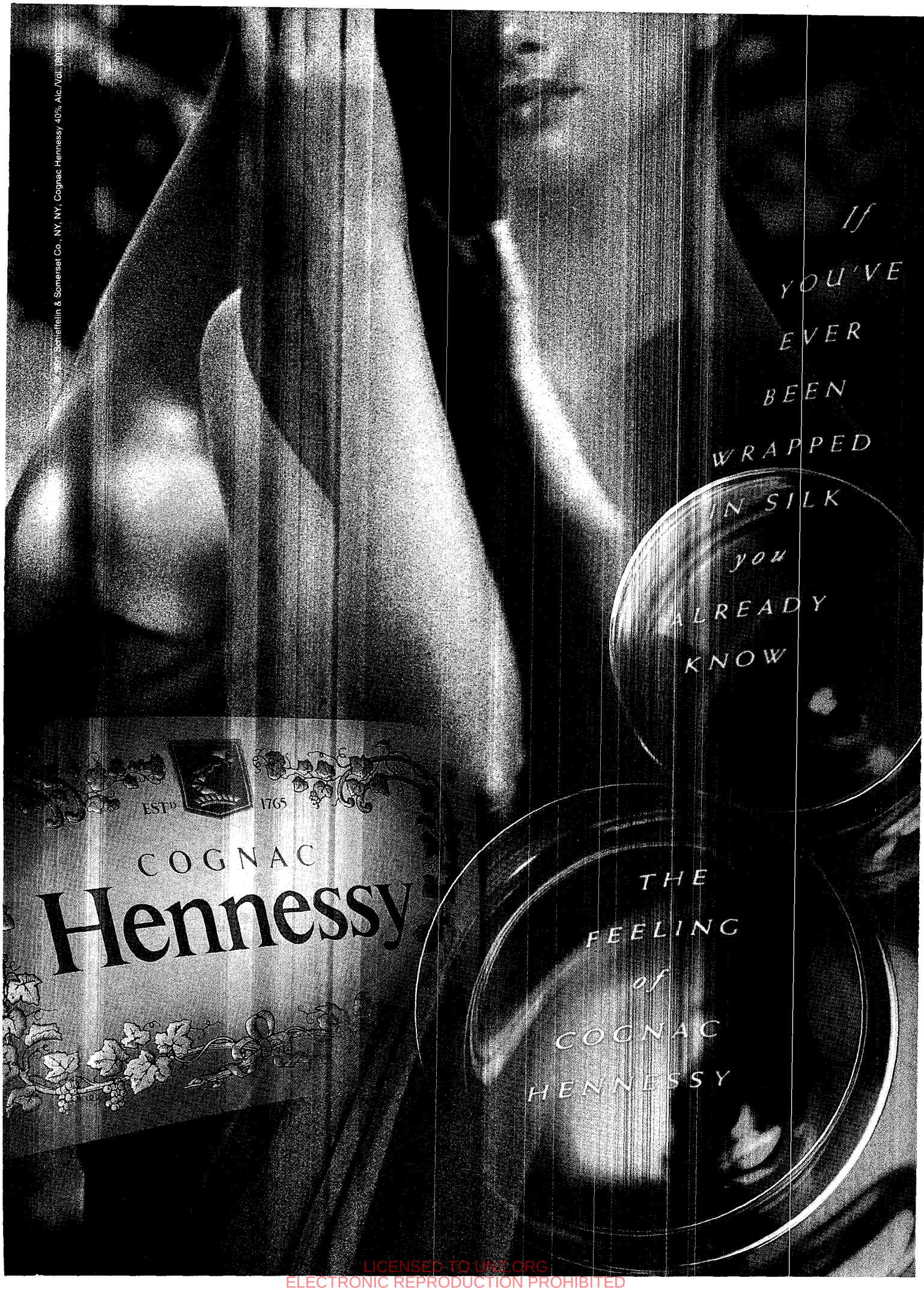

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

A REPORTER friend writes: When Vaclav Havel, the President of Czechoslovakia, arrived last week for his second state visit to the United States, he left behind a country on the verge of tearing itself apart. In late September, in Prague, I watched from the balcony of the Federal Assembly as Havel implored three hundred members of the Czechoslovakian Parliament to "suppress in yourselves what divides you" and help him hold their nation together. "Since our democratic revolution, the situation in our country has never been so serious and tense as it is today," he declared. Havel was referring to the possibility that Czechoslovakia would soon be split in two: that the Slovak Republic—roughly, the eastern third of the country—would declare itself a free and separate state. A week before Havel's speech, the Slovak Parliament had only narrowly voted down a motion to consider an immediate declaration of sovereignty. Havel predicted that the breakup of what is now formally named the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic would have economically "catastrophic consequences" and lead to "legal chaos," and, in the most explosive passage of his speech, he suggested that a failure to resolve the crisis, which had thrown Czechoslovakia's political system into a state of virtual paralysis, might lead him to resign as President. The coming days, he said, would reveal "whether or not this revolution. . .brought to power people capable of leading the country through a difficult period. . .or whether we have missed the great chance for our peoples, leaving us no option but to depart in shame," and he added, "If we do not find a common solution to the current crisis, I, too, will have to draw my own conclusions from this."

Although Havel's speech was broadcast live on radio and was covered by at least two dozen reporters from the domestic and foreign press corps, it failed to generate many headlines outside Czechoslovakia, perhaps because the international media were preoccupied by other matters at the time. On a day when United Nations officials were being detained at gunpoint in Iraq, and George Bush was warning Saddam Hussein not to "miscalculate," the news that Czechoslovakia's head of state had threatened to resign somehow got lost. But influential members of Congress had already warned Havel's emissaries about the financial consequences of political instability. Michael Zantofsky, one of Havel's closest aides, told me in Prague that he had met with some fifteen members of the House and Senate foreign-affairs committees in mid-September. "They made it clear to me that we couldn't count on the same scope and degree of aid and investment if we split into two separate states," he said. Havel's suggestion that he might resign only complicates the situation further, for it is bound to increase outsiders' wariness about putting money into Czechoslovakia.

Of course, Havel may have been bluffing, but if the resignation threat is a bluff it is one that may well be called. All indications are that the Czechoslovakian Parliament will not meet a deadline that he has put forward for resolving the federation crisis. Havel believes that the only fair and legal way to settle the dispute is through a national referendum, in which all citizens vote on whether to continue living together in a single, unified state. It was in a speech to Parliament in December, 1990, that Havel first proposed holding such a referendum. Parliament approved the idea in principle in July of this year, but left to the future such particulars as when to hold the referendum and what should be the precise wording of the question, or questions, asked. Czech-Slovak differences over these issues remain so great that neither side expects progress any time soon.

Havel took the step of appearing before Parliament in late September because time was running out. The conflict had already taken a considerable toll on the country's psychic and economic health. After nearly two years of inconclusive debate, the populace seemed exhausted and impatient. And during all that time crucial foreign-investment packages, economic and ecological reforms, a new democratic constitution, and a host of other measures had been on hold. By Czechoslovakian law, a referendum cannot be held later than five months before a national election; since the next elections are scheduled for early June of 1992, the federation

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referendum has to take place by the beginning of the year or be delayed for at least five months. Such a delay would not only keep the country in political limbo but increase the chances that the Slovak Republic would simply declare independence on its own, thus confronting Havel, who has insisted that Slovakia may secede only by democratic, constitutional means, with a dilemma: if the Slovaks disregard that injunction, should he use force to stop them—and risk inciting a full-blown civil war—or should he simply back down and let them go?

In the end, it is the Czechs and the Slovaks who must decide whether they will live together in a common state or go their separate ways, but the political crisis now engulfing Czechoslovakia has implications for everyone who cares about the prospects for peace and freedom. As Havel has pointed out, the terrain that has emerged since the collapse of Communism is spiked with countless hidden land mines—nationality-based conflicts, economic crises, and intolerance, to name just three—which can erupt with ferocious intensity. "We are seeing it now in Yugoslavia. Tomorrow it can happen anywhere else in the post-Communist world," Havel warned in a speech he gave to a UNESCO conference in early September. It is not difficult to enumerate the steps that would help to stabilize the situation; Havel himself has emphasized, for example, foreign economic aid and investment, and foreign support of democratic institutions. The hard part is to get "the civilized world," as he calls it, to realize that such aid is in its own self-interest.

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Firestorm

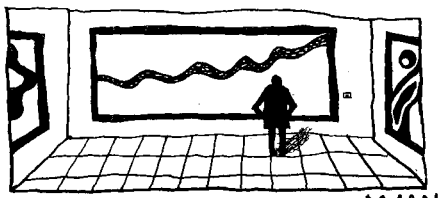
A YOUNG man we know writes from Oakland:

On Sunday morning, while I was sitting with my parents and my older brother in our house, in the foothills, a hot wind blew from the east, and the blue sky filled with black smoke. We didn't realize that it wasn't just a distant brushfire until ash fell on our patio and the air became hard to breathe. We turned on the TV news: it flashed confusing maps, which sometimes positioned us in the center of the flames, and it informed us that poison-oak toxins could be inhaled with the smoke, that houses a few miles away from us were being devoured, and that the fire had been promoted from conflagration to firestorm. Our neighborhood was advised to prepare for evacuation, and we were told that some other parts of town had already been abandoned. My mother has asthma, and we convinced her that she should take a few things in the station wagon, including our little dog, Charlie, and head for her brother's house, across the Bay.

People sometimes imagine hypothetical disasters and think about what they would choose to save—it's another version of the desert-island game. But when we looked around us we just threw up our hands. What mattered? Mom packed up some clothes and her jewelry and silverware. She gathered up all the papers we might need: passports, deeds, insurance and bank documents. My brother and I put random armloads of photograph albums and some of Mom's own paintings in the car. My mother has walls of books, but she took only two: her first edition of "Out of Africa" and a 1921 copy of "The George Sand–Gustave Flaubert Letters."

As my father set about clearing pine needles off our roof, my mother said that it felt strange to be saying goodbye to the house and everything in it, but that there was something comforting about having everything of importance in the back of your car—a promise of a more Spartan or Zenlike tomorrow. I told Charlie to look after her, and waved as she pulled away from home.

It was about four o'clock by then, and my brother and I began watering the roof. All across the neighborhood we could see nervous homeowners with hoses doing the same thing. We spent the rest of the afternoon running back and forth from the TV set to the roof. By evening, nobody was spraying water anymore, because there had been an announcement that water pressure at the fire lines had been diminished. Up on the roof, my brother and I stood next to the chimney and watched the sunset. A few helicopters were still hauling three-hundred-gallon buckets from Lake Merritt up to the fire: we could see their silhouettes against the stunning chemical-red sky. We joked about my college car, a 1964 Buick Wildcat on its last legs, and decided to leave it parked in front of the house, so that it could go out in a blaze of glory.



In the distance we could hear echoes of police evacuation orders: "Clear the area now." At ten o'clock, we spotted little orange licks above a ridge of trees a mile or so away. Soon we could see fire devils—swirling vertical bursts of flame like the ones from flamethrowers—and from the roof we kept an eye on a trail of eucalyptus trees leading toward a cemetery where we guessed the fire to be. Eucalyptus trees contain flammable oil, and there were reports that some of the trees had been exploding in chain reactions. For the first time, my brother and I thought we might be in real danger. We started to pack a couple of duffelbags, but again we were stumped about what to take. My brother got his fountain pen, and I stared for a long time at my guitar but didn't pick it up.

Around midnight, my father and I left on a reconnaissance mission, to find out how close the fire actually was. The blocks we drove through looked the same as ours: full of people loading ice chests, blankets, and suitcases into their station wagons and minivans. Everyone was moving slowly, as if getting ready for a midnight picnic.

We drove up to the evacuation line, near the reservoir, and could see houses burning beyond—timbers backlit by fireballs. Fire engines roared past. I walked over to a man straddling his Harley, which had flames painted on the gas tank. "People are the main thing," he told me.

When we got home, the flames closest to us had subsided, but we kept a sleepy watch. Twice in the night, I leaped up ready for action, disoriented. The morning felt like a gift. In the den, the TV was still on. Cool sea breezes were blowing in through the Golden Gate, the reports said, and were aiding the firefighters. I went out on my bicycle and saw families unloading their cars in a daze, just as they had loaded them the night before. At the police barricades, people waited anxiously to be allowed past, so they could

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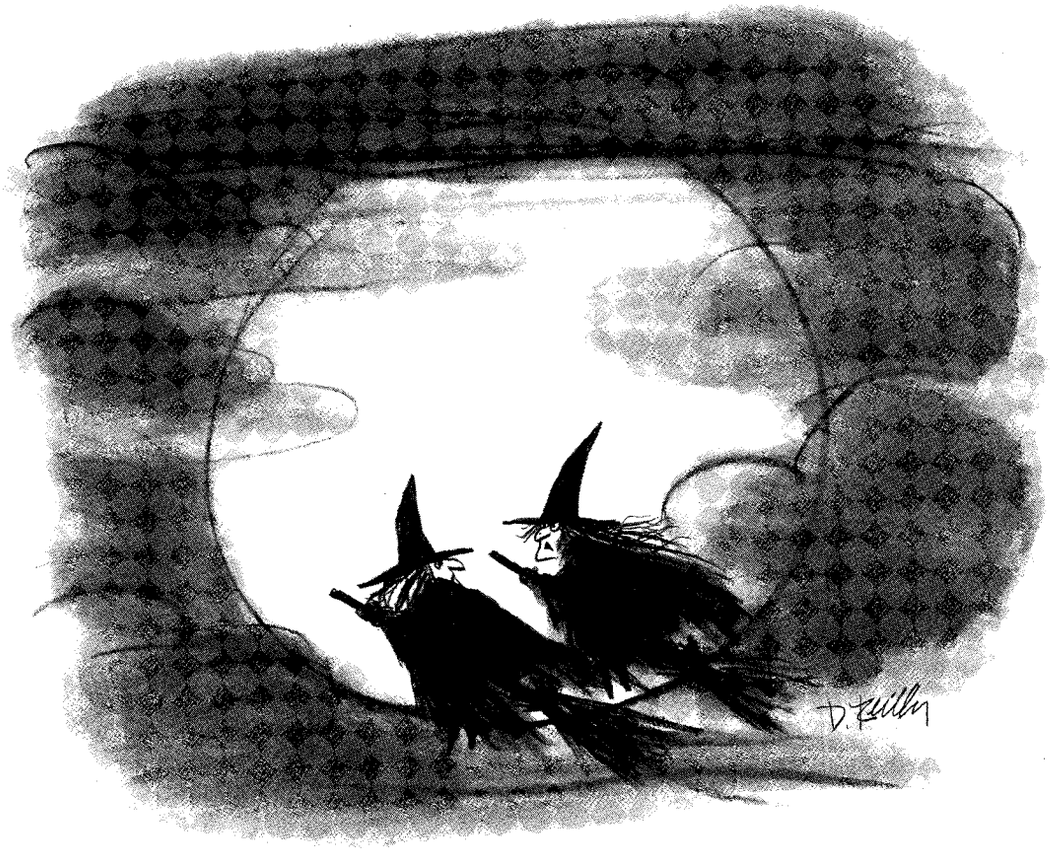
see if their houses had been spared.

Mom got home shortly before noon, and we all sat down to coffee. Over the TV came reports of devastation and stories of survivors—stories of reunited families, of people finding houses with their Halloween decorations intact, of odd significant objects discovered in the rubble. The local papers filled whole sections with accounts of daring escapes and true heroics. We heard that the Salvation Army had to request people to stop bringing donations of food to its loading docks, which were overflowing, and that a Cadillac stood unsinged, a parking ticket on its windshield, on a street where no houses remained. Time and again, we were told about neighbors who cared—about a skinhead who helped a retired man save his house with garden hoses and a shovel, about people who had lost their homes and then volunteered to help others. It was the same way people had reacted to the 1989 earthquake. For the second time in two years, the Bay Area's resilience had been put to the test, and the people had come through.



"I'm dropping the Halloween grind after this year. I'll do some consulting and open a little occult bookstore."

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Speeches

IN explanation of his flagging memory, Robert Gates recently told the Senate confirmation committee, "I have to admit to you that when I left C.I.A. in 1989. . .I did a major data dump." Gordon Skene, a collector of tape-recorded history and the producer of the recently released album "Great Speeches of the 20th Century," fears that America has experienced a similar loss. "Somewhere between Churchill's Finest Hour and Bush's Defining Moment, a stable of effective public speakers and policymakers have fallen into obscurity," Mr. Skene told us recently. "Just because some time has passed doesn't mean we should stop learning from those who have something to say. For example, we've already forgotten Adlai Stevenson. If he's recalled at all, it's as the guy who couldn't win a big election. But forget about the two losses to Ike and listen to the man speak. He's elegant, he's compassionate, and he thinks." Imitating Stevenson's Midwestern twang, Mr. Skene quoted, " 'You are Americans. Your forebears found a wilderness and began to convert it to a fair land with only three weapons: a Bible, an axe, a plow. . . . You are a people who are just beginning their high adventure on this continent.' "

Mr. Skene, by trade a free-lance record producer working out of Los Angeles, collected his speeches in obscurity, but—like two mainstays of his tape library, Winston Churchill and Richard Nixon—he knew that his time would come. "Actually, the call came last February," he said matter-of-factly. "James Austin, at Rhino Records, had known me for ages as a guy who collects the weird stuff, and finally he just asked me if I'd like to put a collection of speeches together. I was elated. Here was a chance to say to the entire nation, 'Sit down and check this out.' " On receiving Mr. Austin's invitation, Mr. Skene disappeared into his apartment, where he keeps his collection of speeches and old news broadcasts. He emerged five months later with an anthology that crowds ninety years of history onto three hundred minutes of tape. The result puts Malcolm X a few minutes before Oliver North, and Spiro Agnew a mere button-push beyond Charles Lindbergh. "These juxtapositions are a main part of the collection's concept," Mr. Skene explained. "If you listen to the whole tape straight through, what you're really hearing is our encroaching illiteracy. Churchill's war speech holds up better after fifty-one years than George Bush's Gulf War address does after just one. Maybe people will come to understand how boring we've become and how bored with ourselves we are. The reason we have sound bites instead of speeches now is that they're easier to digest—they're simple. When I chose what to include in the collection, I avoided speeches that we've heard over and over again, so they've turned into clichés. Instead, I picked

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less popular ones, to give a better sense of the speaker's character. For instance, I could have used Adlai Stevenson's famous concession speech, where he compares himself to a boy who has stubbed his toe in the dark—'too old to cry, but it hurts too much to laugh'—but then I listened to his campaign talks and remembered just how eloquent he was, a remarkable speaker. There's really no need to hear him lose again."

The modern speech peaked as an art form along with radio in the forties and fifties, Mr. Skene believes. "It's never been the same since television," he said. "I still tape newscasts, but it's different now. When I was a kid, a press conference by Khrushchev might last three hours. If Bush goes for thirty minutes, it's long."

The only recent speech that Skene ranks with the speeches of his youth is Governor Mario Cuomo's keynote address at the 1984 Democratic National Convention. "People ask why I included that one, and I tell them because it's a great speech. Still, when Cuomo assures us, 'We can make it all the way with the whole family intact, and we have more than once,' he's really recalling the sentiments of speakers like Stevenson and Roosevelt."

Mr. Skene said that as he has grown older (he's forty now) he has seen the emotions of politicians fade with their sense of history. "That's why the old speeches are so much more effective," he said. "People used to have a keener sense of drama and a greater appreciation of tragedy. Just listen to William Jennings Bryan." His voice took on the Biblical resonance of a populist: "'Behold a republic, standing erect while empires all around are bowed beneath the strength of armaments, whose flag is love while the others' are only tears.'" In his own voice, Mr. Skene went on, "Hit the forward button on your CD player a few times, and Oliver North is talking about Iran-Contra and 'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly.' Everything about the old stuff, even the poor sound quality, is moving. The crackling lends drama and authenticity. You can sense England under attack as Churchill speaks on the shortwave; you fear you may lose contact with him at any time. What's the point of cleaning up the old speeches anyway?" He added, with a laugh, "No one ever heard Hitler in stereo."

Progress

As a rule, this department shies away from specific product endorsements—there's just too much great stuff out there to choose from. For instance, the other day Robert Redford sent us a Sundance catalogue that featured a buckaroo wall sconce—"both an art object and a nostalgic talisman of the Old West"—that we could have for only two hundred and twenty-five dollars, plus the freight from Utah. This struck us as just the sort of thing to mount on the office wall next to the bulletin board and admire while contemplating whether to buy a new purple thirty-nine-dollar strapless merry-widow gift set from Victoria's Secret—underwire cups, stretch point-d'esprit back, light boning, and matching G-string—as a Halloween outfit. To ease into a decision-making frame of mind, we might also want to spend a few hours inside an Alphamassage sensory-enhancing spa module—an ergonomically designed comfort bed that synergistically stimulates and harmonizes both mind and body fitness with a combination of dry-heat sauna, vibration massage, aromatherapy, and powerful microchip-technology-driven audiovisuals. Only fifteen thousand green ones at Hammacher Schlemmer, plus a hundred and twenty-five for shipping and handling.

Our consumer-neutrality policy, then, boils down to this: though we suspect we badly want it *all*, we've never actually done the arduous legwork to find out. Anyway, we're suddenly feeling sort of hungry, and fortunately some people who are eager for us to plug a life-style-enhancing new ground-beef product have invited us to a cookout at the Tavern on the Green. First, however, we're going to have to sit through a very important press conference.

Each of the three big Sony televisions here in the Terrace Room bears a white message on a green background saying we should stand by for the "ConAgra Healthy Choice Extra Lean Press Conference. Originating Live from Omaha, NE." The yellow tablecloth, the baskets of lilies and zinnias and mums, and the Baroque flute music segueing into the Keith Jarrettish piano music are all doing a terrific job of building excitement about the new ground-beef product. In just a moment, Stephen Van Tassel, the vice-president of nutritional foods for ConAgra, Inc., which sells about twenty billion dollars' worth of food-related products annually, will rise from his red velvet chair near one wall, where he has been seated with several colleagues who for some reason seem about as cheerful as pallbearers, and will approach the microphone.

"It's remarkable, Mr. Volmer. You have the clothes of a man half your age!"

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O.K., he's arrived at the microphone now. We're going to skip over the substance of the press conference—we don't want to be guilty of any gesture that might be construed as a specific product endorsement—and we'll focus instead on the *form* of the press conference. The form of the press conference seems excellent. *Excellent.* As Stephen Van Tassel has just pointed out, the people in Omaha can hear us but can't see us, but we, thanks to satellites and science in general, can both hear and see them. So we're all set in our little New York-based media audience here at the Tavern on the Green—invisible to Omaha, but not to be taken lightly—and minutes from now we're going to be positioned for some live-action dialoguing with the Omaha-based ConAgra corporate brass, who will also be dialoguing and making eye contact with the Omaha-based media. First, a short videotaped intro: there's the cornflower-blue Nebraska sky, the pleasant sunshine, the erupting fountains, and the brick-and-glass ConAgra world headquarters. And now there's a live podium shot of Scott Rahn and Richard (Dick) Monfort and Charles M. (Mike) Harper.

Again, we don't want to bog down in too much substance, so let's just say that Scott Rahn and Dick Monfort and Mike Harper all have positive things to say about the new ground-beef product, echoing a remark Stephen Van Tassel just made about "seriously impacting the way Americans eat hamburger." Though Scott Rahn is ConAgra's vice-president for internal development, when he publicly refers to the advent of this new ground-beef product, which contains only four per cent fat (as opposed to conventional ground beef, which contains quite a bit more), as "exciting" it seems clear that he is speaking not only as a corporate citizen but as a person who has eaten hamburgers in the past and intends to eat more hamburgers in the future. The same goes for Dick Monfort, the president and chief operating officer of the ConAgra Red Meat Companies, when he takes his turn and says, "A very proud moment for me. . . . The issue was how do we keep the juiciness and tenderness. . . . Thousands of in-store demos." And ditto Mike Harper, the chairman and chief executive officer of ConAgra, and his heartfelt declaration "We're here today to announce a revolutionary breakthrough to the American consumer who loves a good old-fashioned hamburger." When Mike Harper, who looks like the sort of man most people would enjoy having as a dad, says, "It tastes great, and, nutritionally, it's a fine product for healthy people that want to stay healthy. . . in fact, this product is so healthy that you may feel that you should go to the hospital to eat it," it seems that every positive sentiment that could possibly be uttered about a new beef product has been uttered. That is not precisely the case, however, because Phil Sokolof has not yet been heard from.

"But, hey, what is 'recession' but a word? And the same goes for 'money,' right? And how about 'human beings'?"

• •

No one asked Phil Sokolof to appear at the press briefing—he just volunteered—but the ConAgra people in Omaha are certainly glad he showed up. Phil Sokolof is neither a ConAgra employee nor a shareholder. Rather, he is the founder and president and funding source of the National Heart Savers Association, which is also based in Omaha. Simply because Phil Sokolof felt like it, this morning's *Times* and Washington *Post* and *U.S.A. Today* and five other newspapers all featured full-page advertisements, paid for by the National Heart Savers Association, declaring that ConAgra's new ground-beef product is a good thing. Phil Sokolof, who likes to refer to himself as "America's No. 1 cholesterol fighter" and is not shy about expressing his feelings, has come up to the microphone now. "I'm ecstatic," he says. "It is a dream come true for me, and a dream come true for the American people. . . . A four-ounce hamburger that has one gram of fat! That is down in the area of white skinless chicken. This is unbelievable!"

Phil Sokolof says Americans consume over a billion and a half pounds of hamburger fat annually, and that means, by our estimate, that if everyone switched to ConAgra's new ground-beef product fat consumption would be reduced by six hundred thousand tons. But Phil Sokolof neglects to address the problem of what to do with all the leftover beef tallow. Though the cookout is about to begin on the patio, we find it difficult not to concentrate on the imminent beef-tallow-disposal crisis. That's almost five pounds of lard per year for every man, woman, and child. A life spent wallowing in beef tallow would be unhealthful, if not outright hazardous. Clearly, affordable, fail-safe beef-tallow-containment facilities must be made available to communities throughout the United States. Progress and prosperity carry heavy responsibilities. Priorities must be addressed. Lunch is just going to have to wait.

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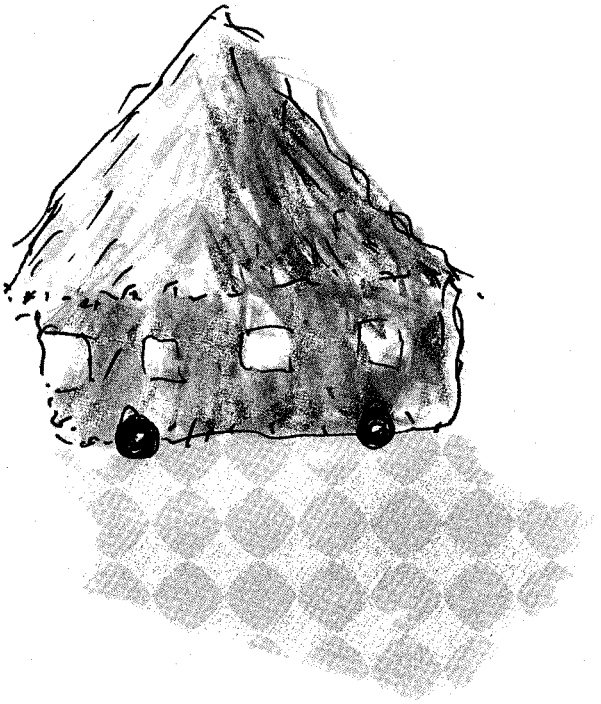
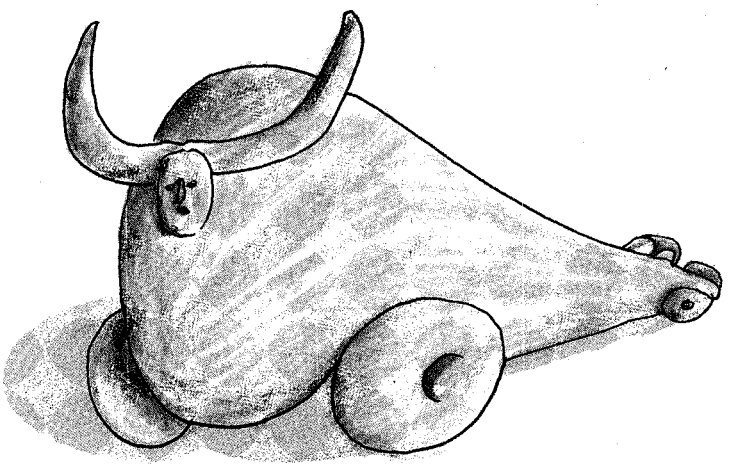
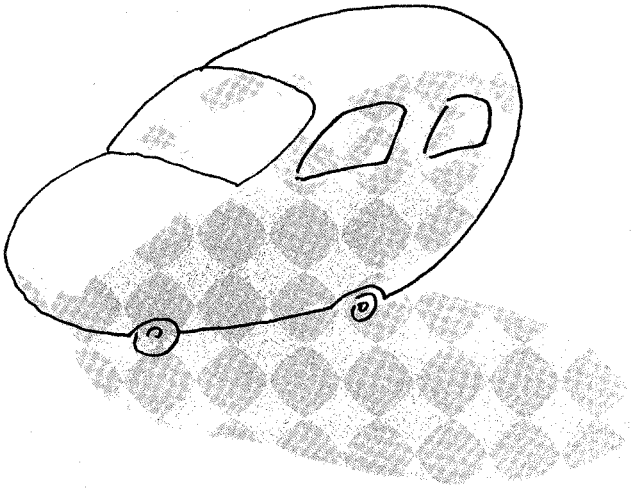
ARTISTS AT THE AUTO SHOW



CLAUDE MONET'S HAY ROVER



PICASSO'S TAURUS LX



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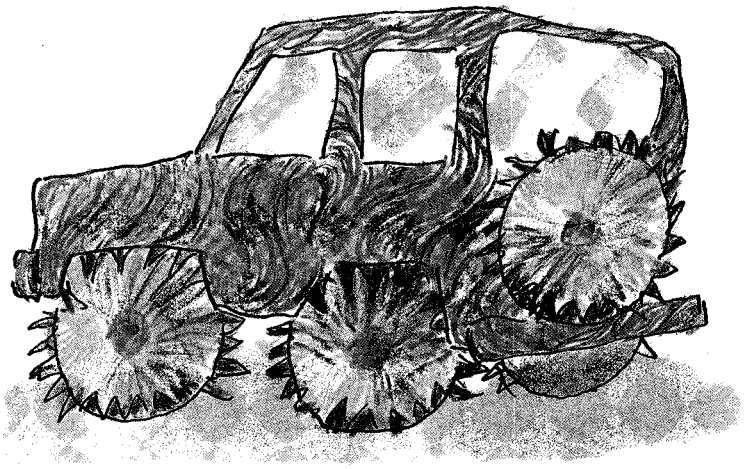

VAN GOGH'S TOURNESOL 4X4

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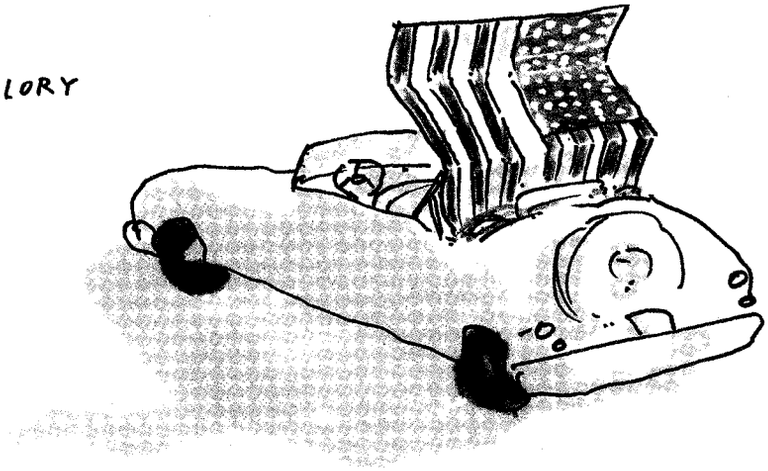
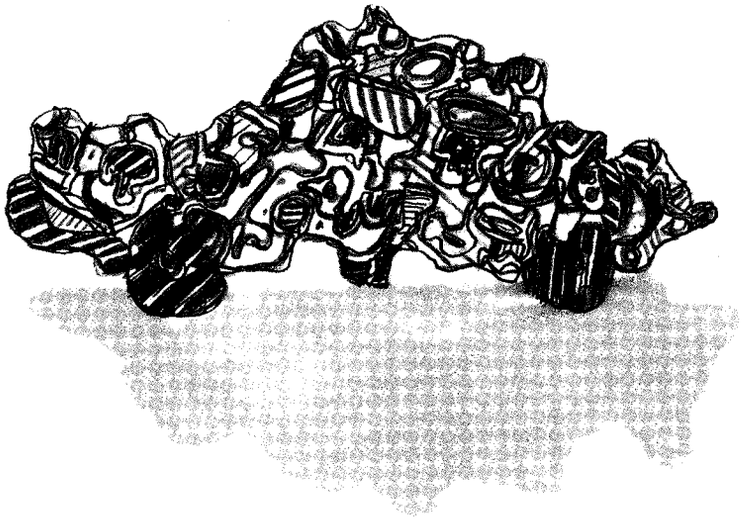
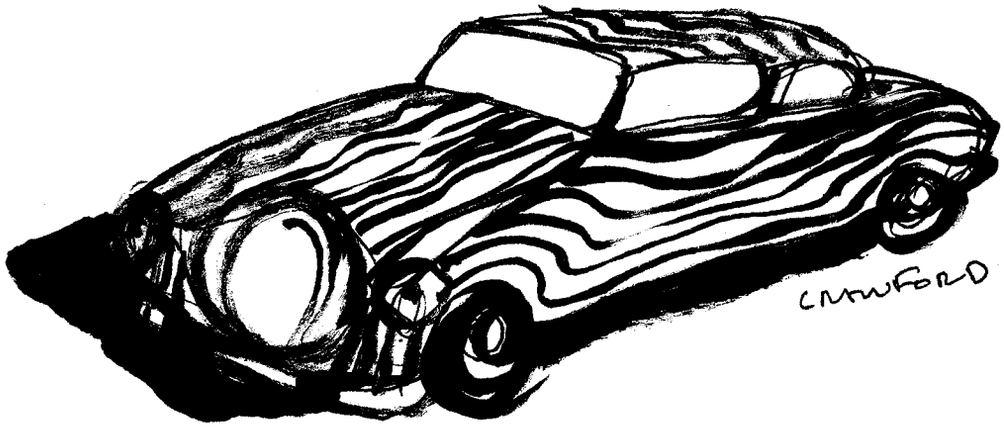
JASPER JOHNS' OLD GLORY CABRIOLET





DUBUFFET'S BROUGHAM

GIACOMETTI'S LE STRETCH 300S



EDVARD MUNCH'S JITTERS GT

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THE CUT

PRODIGAL they were, her two little scamps, with song, riddle, and recitation. They even climbed the apple tree, although forbidden to, and shook the remaining apples down in a welter. "A dozen for thrippence . . . a dozen for thrippence," they said, careless now of being reprimanded. Their father was asleep. Now and then they tore into the kitchen, openly said her name, said, "Is she here yet, Nellie?" The arrival of the new girl, or the hoped-for arrival of the new girl, had in some way infected them, as if they expected her to bring excitement into their lives. They loved excitement. They trotted out the word "bored" as an adult might, thought Saturdays quite boring, Sundays very boring, what with the constitutionals on the Common and having to behave like good boys all the time, while inside two reckless little hearts were beating and conspiring.

"My uncle Billy," she was hearing, to various tunes, sometimes sung in unison, sometimes in counterpoint, sung until they were hoarse and had to pause for a moment and ask for drinks, soft drinks. They loved the sound of the word "soft."

My uncle Billy has a ten-foot willy—
Showed it to the girls next door;
They thought it was a snake
And hit it with a rake
And now it's only four foot four.

"You'll have sore throats by evening," she said, pointing to their discarded Fair Isle sweaters, their Sunday best, lying on a bit of muddy garden. What would her mother have said? Her mother had knit these sweaters and sent them from Ireland by registered post. Her mother loved them, lived for their summer holidays, wrote months ahead to tell what she would be cooking—indeed, offered them a choice, asked if for their first meal they would like boiled chicken or roast, the advantage of boiled being the broth, which of course she would season. They seemed to like seasoning. Yes, her mother loved them. "Princes" she called them. Two little princes. Barbarians. Her mother also requested in her letters that they bring bags for the jams and jellies she had made for them. She listed the flavors: black currant, bramble, and crab apple. While they were there she spooned these jellies onto scones for them, and they ate until, as they said, they had little "corporations." Her mother had taught them that word and other grownup words such as "disgusting." Porridge was disgusting. She sat them alternately on her knee and sang:

Dan, Dan, the Dirty Old Man,
Washed his face in a frying pan,
Combed his hair with the leg of a chair,
Dan, Dan, the Dirty Old Man.

When they were there, they went to bed very late, long after dark, making much of seeing sky, with its moonlight and so on, since it could not be pleasantly seen in a city. They were far too precocious. Her mother brought them lemonade and biscuits in bed, brought the tin so they could choose. They argued over this—both, of course, wanting the same ones—and called each other the foulest names, often ending up with pillow fights. One prevented the other from having his favorite biscuit by bruising the last one to pieces; then, after the inevitable bawling, there had to be a truce, and like nice little chaps they had to make up. That was her mother's doing. When they shook hands they laughed, even marvelled at the show of temper and at the fluency of bad words that they had at their disposal. When her mother wasn't looking, one of them crept out and brought the dog, Dixie, upstairs. Dixie was not supposed to be up there, not supposed to be in the house at all—even Dixie herself knew it. She cowered and tried to bolt halfway down the stairs, but they dragged her by her big amber mane, brought her into the room, fed her biscuit crumbs, gave her a sup of lemonade, poured it into the bone lid of a jewelry box, in fact did heinous things. Dixie was warned not to bark or yelp and not to do No. 1 or No. 2.

"No, no. One," one said.

"Oy, oy. No, no. Two," the other said, and saying it and repeating it they laughed until they feared they would burst. When her mother came to kiss them good night, Dixie was under the bed with the blue chenille bedspread dragged down, and as Nell's mother tried to tuck it in the children told the most elaborate lies, such as they had fever, or claustrophobia, or some other high-flown thing. Hearing of fever urged their grandmother to make them a hot drink, and this they did not refuse, because they hated going to sleep; they hated dreams and already claimed to be victims of nightmares.

WHAT would become of them? Nell thought that morning, admitting that this hilarity they were showing in their suburban garden was a little too much. They knew something. They had guessed. That was why they laughed and spluttered and shook the remaining apples onto the grass, then dived down and scooped bits out of them and left the scooped-out apples on the lawn, rendering them useless for stewing or jam. The wasps were on them at once.

It was autumn; wherever she looked there were wasps—around the butter dish, buzzing to get through its glass, onion-shaped lid, crouched on the ledge where she had geraniums and cacti to brighten things up, on the draining board, in the garden itself, in the scooped-out apples, and once in the sole of her foot as she ran to fetch some clothes in before a shower. It was like a nail driven through, quite piercing. Yes, they knew of the antagonism between their parents—the silences at meals, then letters of reprimand that their father left for their mother, each night, propped against the cereal packet—and that was why they put on this show of bravura, to leaven things.

"Is she here yet, Nell? . . . Nello?" Paddy said. Paddy was the elder and, having spoken in such a peremptory way, he waited a second to see if perhaps she was going to chastise him. She wasn't. Tristan then repeated it. When they said her Christian name like that, it meant they were indifferent to any correction, were in a kind of spin.

"Not yet," Nell said, adding that probably the new girl had changed her mind but hadn't bothered to let them know, that young girls were like that—unreliable.

"She'll come," they said. But the new girl had missed her bus and was probably now at a bus stop awaiting another.

The buses came to their lane every twenty minutes. They lived on the outskirts of London and transport to and fro was fitful. An added reason why she disliked the place. The Styx,

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she called it, but of course only to herself. Her husband, Walter, had chosen the house, said it was healthy, there being a park opposite, and that the trees produced the necessary oxygen for the children's lungs. Nothing wrong with their lungs, she thought. They were now pelting each other with butts of apples and with the sleeves of their sweaters.

HER mother had never liked Walter; none of Nell's family had. They tried to stop her, but she bested them—ran from an upstairs room where they had locked her, got out a window and down the stone, holding on to each ridge as if by the skin of her feet, bolted down the back avenue so as not to be seen, and then, very casually, thumbed a lift, telling the lorry driver that she had to go and see a doctor in Dublin. In the city she took a bus to the center and another bus to Walter's abode, told her sorry tale, was gently treated by him, given coffee from a brown earthenware pot, coffee and stone-ground biscuits. She would never forget it. He was glad to take her in; he was lonely, too, had been without female company for a few years. Later that day he even drove her to a big town not far from his place and sent her with money to the drapery shop to buy clothes, because she had come with nothing but the things on her back. She bought underwear and stockings and a nightie and a pink frock with little swellings like blisters all over it. He did not like the dress very much. He liked her. She was afraid of him. She was obe-

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dient. Her family wrestled to get her back—first force, then pleading, then her mother's heart attack, then her mother's second heart attack, then her mother's being on three kinds of pills, and so on. In the end they were almost happy to see her married, or "fixed up" as they called it. Better than seeing her as a concubine. Marry in haste, repent at leisure.

Oh yes, her mother must have guessed that it was not roses. She could have seen that clearly on the last holiday, when Nell and her husband addressed barely a word to each other. Even on the nights they played cards together around the kitchen table, Walter made only sarcastic remarks to her—about her brainlessness when she couldn't get the hang of the suits. Her mother guessed and felt inwardly vindicated, but said nothing. The row did not come about that, about Nell's husband's alienation from her; the row came, of course, about the children and their upbringing. She was in the scullery washing up. She washed up a lot to appear good in her mother's eyes and also to pass the time, because there was nothing else to do; she washed cutlery and dishes and tin cans in which milk had been, where there was a lingering sour smell. She washed them and rinsed them. She was washing shelves, the shelves that were covered in oilcloth with a pattern of robins on it. Her mother was gutting two chickens on layers of newspaper on the kitchen table. Cockerels for next day's lunch. She called to Nell quite sternly.

"Nellie," she said, "come in here for a moment."

By the tone, Nell feared the worst and quaked. She held a cup and a tea cloth in her hand to give herself authority, to give herself something to hold on to.

"Where are those children going to be educated over there, in what kind of school?"

"We don't know yet. We haven't decided," Nell said, trying to bluff it. Since she and Walter and the children had moved to London, Paddy had turned five, was ready for school.

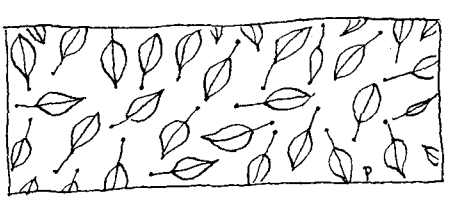
"Are they going to a Catholic school?" her mother asked.

"I told you I don't know yet," Nell said and watched her mother tug at the innards with gusto, then drop them anywhere, often missing the newspaper that was supposed to take this refuse. Brown, khaki, and red innards were all jumbled together, the little shivering livers frail and helpless in contrast to the stout ropy necks and the plump gray gizzards.

"You must give me your word," her mother said.

"I won't. . . . They're our children," Nell said, whereupon her mother flared up, poked savagely in the cavern of a chicken, and broke the sac, letting acrid stuff spill over the pimply flesh. One word led to another, words packed with recrimination. Words that cut like implements. Walter came from the next room, Nell's father from another room, where he had been reading the morning paper, and now four people were arguing, accusing, saying savage, festering things until suddenly her husband grasped her arm, a thing he had not done for many a moon, led her away, and said, "We don't have to put up with this neolithic behavior."

They packed quickly, carelessly; her husband went out into the fields to call the children, and she dreaded being alone in the bedroom in case her mother came up for a second harangue. She flung things into bags, even flung ornaments by mistake, which she had to take out again. The children appeared, crying because they had to leave their weapons and all their other toys in the



BAT

With no warning and only the slightest whishing sound
it was in the room with me, trapped and flying
wall to wall, a wild heart out of its element: flat
black leather wings that never stop, body
bunched as a baby's fist, the tiny head peering
blindly, out of its mouth a piercing
inaudible pulse-scream that sets its course
and keeps it beating, barely grazing the painted
walls, the wardrobe, desk, chest of drawers (all
smelling of outdoors, I suppose—walnut, maple,
oak—and sending it, surely, round the bend)
while I try to keep track of its dodgy swerves,
ducking when it flutters at me, springing after
with my eyes. All this is happening
in a fathomless silence that binds us
to one another for a hypnotized little while,
making me feel as the creature circles and circles
as if I'd been kissed repeatedly in sleep, lips
lightly brushing, gone. In the end, by
luck, it seems, not navigation, it goes
through the window I've scrambled open, leaving
me in another kind of silence
to watch its stuttering flight over bright green grass—
by light afflicted, desperate for the dark. I keep
to myself that other, unseamed silence
in which it went about its woeful task, trying
to find a way to friendly shade, its own
crepuscular and insect-humming haven, those
jinking missions in the homely dark, its own
heartbeat keeping it one with an everyday world
of intoxicating scents and glimmers, almost infinite
possibilities. Gone for good. It's the sheer
stoic silence (to my ears) of the whole operation
that stays with me, teaching me how to behave
in a tight corner: hold your tongue, keep moving, try
everything more than once, steer by brief kisses and
the fleeting grace of dark advances, quick retreats,
until you find lying in your way the window, open.

—Eamon Grennan

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fields, their hallowed haunts where they had seen foxes in daylight and hog badgers at dusk.

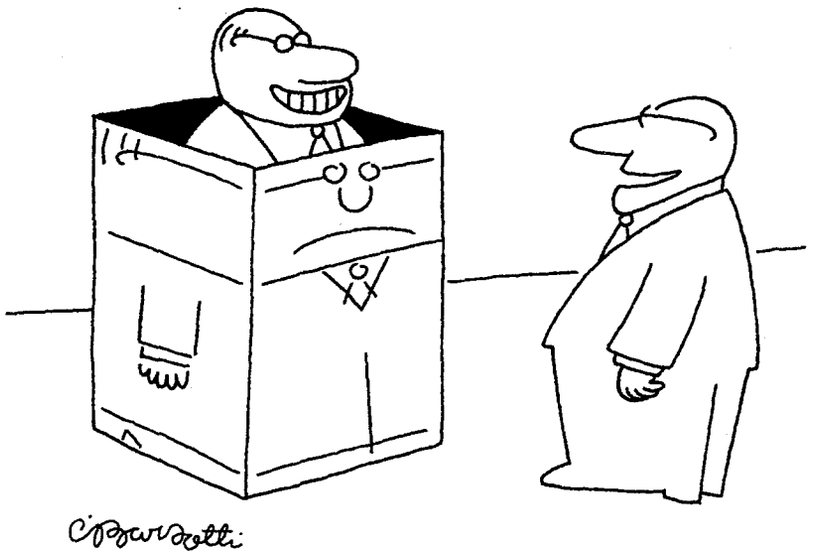
"Forget your toys and your guns," their father said, then told them to wash their hands. Finding that both taps in the bathroom were without water, he cursed aloud and said, "If they cared as much about body hygiene as soul hygiene, it would be better for all of us." The children spat on their clay-covered hands and wiped them grudgingly with a towel.

They were disconsolate at having to go downstairs and say goodbye to their grandparents, formally, like little gentlemen. By the way they walked, with their shoulders hunched up, they seemed to know that there had been a debacle. Their father escorted them, looking serene, almost jaunty. She carried the bags out to the car and slumped into the front seat, sinking down, hoping to become invisible. Self-immolation was everything. She saw her father approach, his tweed cap far back on his head and his eyes crazed and scalding. She thought for an instant that he was going to open the car door, haul her out, and kick her, as he so easily might.

"Your mother in there crying her heart out, and you don't go and put your arms around her," he shouted through the open window.

"Tell her I'll write," Nell said in what was patently a terrified voice. To make peace now would be everything, but it was quite impossible. The unspent quarrels of many years were crammed into this one. Yes, if they could say everything, haul every single grievance out of their innards the way her mother had hauled the chicken entrails out, roughly and ferociously, then it might be all right, they might start afresh, poison or no poison. Yet she could not do it, because she could not foresee where it would all lead to. It might go too far. Rows can. Her own grievances she knew, but she could not divine her mother's. Her mother might just say something that Nell could never obliterate from her mind, some remark that would tear at her guts day in and day out, some blame or some disgrace that she could not live with, or rather that she could only live with in a state of persecution.

"Little shite," her father said, staring into her face so close that she could see his stubble, see each hair, and smell the chicory from the bottled coffee he had recently drunk. He had changed from tea to coffee and preferred the flavor of the bottled kind.



"Ah, there's that big smile!"

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"Tell her I'll write," she said a little more vehemently.

"Little shite . . . and you always were, always, from the minute you were born." A death blow there and then.

The children came and got into the back of the car, snivelling. Her father and her husband exchanged a few sharp, unpleasant words and then, as they drove off, the dog darted from beneath the hedge, caught up with them, and ran in front of the car, trying to impede it.

"Even their dog is a lunatic," her husband said, while the children, seeing the animal, wept afresh and put their hands out to give it reassurance. That made things worse. The dog now leapt to the window as they said endearing things to it, while her husband pressed on the horn, making a sound that could be heard in the village a mile away. The children were crying unashamedly. He leaned back, lifted them by the lapels of their jackets, and set them down again smartly, mercilessly. Unable to protect them, unable to account for herself, she suddenly screamed in a manner that alarmed her.

"Get me out of here, get me out of here," she called, stunning the children into silence. Her husband asked her to please cut out the hysterics and to be so kind as to get out, drag the unwieldy animal down to the gate, and open the gate, so that they could finally make the much desired departure.

Walking along with the yelping dog as her companion, she thought that she would probably not see the place again, except perhaps for a funeral. Even the cows resting under the trees seemed to glare at her, seemed to be full of seething ill will. The irascible dog made them fidgety, as if they might get up and assault her. Some of the dog hairs were coming off in her wet palm, and she had to crouch to keep a firm hold on her. The car hooter still sounded incessantly and imperiously. Her mother and father would hear it and it would be added to the litany of resentment that was now being voiced. Yes, it was a bitter ending. She passed the horse-chestnut tree, which they used to tell her she had been born beneath and which she preferred to the blue room, with its damp walls, its slop bucket, and the array of holy pictures that were both suppliant and chastising. How beautiful the tree looked, the leaves with their first coat of russet—a rich, thriving russet that had nothing to do with withering. That would come later. Yes, she was seeing everything despite her frenzy, or maybe because of it. The blackberries were so bright and shiny they seemed to be saying something. Saying, "We are blackberries. Take pride in us." The gate needed painting. Shavings of dried paint curled on the wrought iron, and each time it was opened or shut another little consignment scattered onto the ground.

The car caught up with her, coming at a stately progress. The last thing she noticed was a bed of nettles so dense

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and luxuriant that it seemed to rasp with green fire. Yes, her mother had guessed then about Nell's teetering marriage but had said nothing. Nothing, that is, until the break came.

NELL left her husband as she had been poised to do for so long, and left without any qualms at all, simply put on her coat and went out. First she took her children, filched them from the playground the way so many do, but then, a few days later, he was vowing to fight her, to fight her in the dirtiest way possible, to keep them. It was the commencement of battle. The marriage had been a kind of truce compared with this. She wrote to her mother, wrote with all the urgency and muddle of a child, knowing that it would be welcome news, in spite of the shock. The reply had to come poste restante, since she was in a different lodging each night.

Holding her mother's envelope, which was so thick and sturdy, she felt a moment of strength, of forgiveness and of a burgeoning hope that life was going to be all right, that the worst had been. Out on the street, she halted by a lamppost to read it leisurely, and also because there were tremors in her heart. That was natural. A fat letter, a wad of words. Warm, comforting words. Instead, a diatribe. Her mother said that it was no surprise, that it had been crystal clear for all to see, that even the most casual caller could tell how bitter and loveless the marriage was; then she dilated on each and every failing of his, reminding Nell of the trouble she had taken with meals for him, because of his faddiness, only to be put in the halfpenny places, to be treated like a skivvy. Next came the forbearance of her father, who had taken scarcely veiled insults from a man who was not fit to clean his boots. But that was the past and what mattered now was the future. Her mother was asking her to make some vows concerning that future. She was to kneel down as she read the words, kneel wherever she happened to be, and swear on her oath that she would never touch an alcoholic drink as long as she lived and, more important, that she would never have to do with any man in body or soul. She stood there in the street and thought, I'm going to do something terrible; I'm going to disgrace myself right here. It was a fairly smart street, with antique shops—a tiny oak staircase, replica of a larger one, the single item in one window, and in another a beautiful china cabinet with carved rosettes, and, above, the lamppost with its hanging basket of fresh, leaking flowers, so gay and jaunty, and she thinking, This woman, my mother, is not my mother, because she has no pity; this is a mother who is made of stone.

THE words wrote themselves. They larruped out of her like paint, spewing over walls, ceiling, and mirror. "Dear Mother," it began. The "Dear" seemed comical under the circumstances.

DEAR MOTHER,

Brickbats and tiles say the bells of St. Giles. . . . I was with cousins of yours, distant cousins. Years ago. They thought I would be pleasant and not the mope I was. I was a pest, crying all the time, so that they sent me out for walks, and, passing that restaurant, getting the bistro-gravy smell, a terrible hunger gripped me, not just a body hunger, or a mouth hunger, but a mind hunger, a longing for you, made all the worse when I saw cakes, like princesses in their ruffles, sugared and decorated, some with coconut, some with icing, some with chocolate flakes, and was again gripped by the smell—it was more than a smell; it went right down into the taste buds, through them, into the flesh, the chafing flesh. I could taste the coffee, or the coconut, or the vanilla, or whatever, without the satisfaction of it, and hurried back to the cousins sooner than expected and was made decidedly unwelcome since I was put to do some household chores, making beds and so forth. I wrote you a letter that spoke of my misery but didn't know how to post it. I was not resourceful enough to find a post office and couldn't ask them for a stamp. They made remarks about me, imitated my snivels, my accent, asked if I was not going a bit too far.

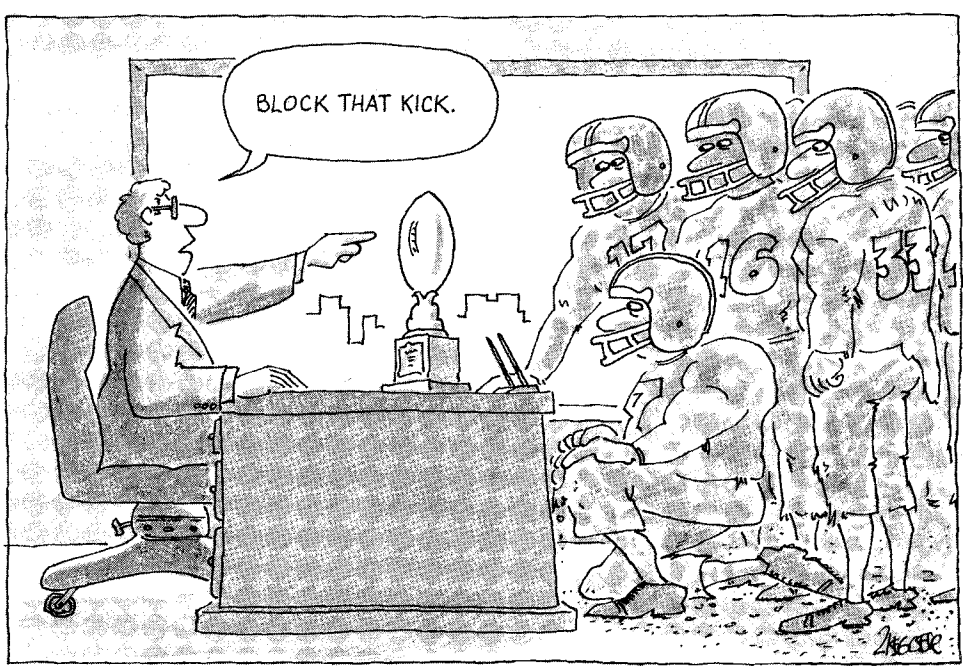
"I want to go home!" I would say.

"'I want to go home!'" they would say.

As a sop for having been so cruel to me, a bicycle outing was proposed. One of the girls—there were three girls, you remember—one of them suggested that some evening she and I should go to the outskirts of the city on an expedition. It was a perilous passage through busy streets, then out to look at bungalows, pebble-dash bungalows, named after seas and rivers and resorts in Italy and so forth, ordinary abodes with ordinary gates and gravel paths, and she remarking from time to time how pretty it all was. She also stopped her bicycle to crack an egg—can you believe it—in case she got weak. She had brought a few raw eggs in a basket and now cracked one and swallowed it directly from the shell. I was disgusted. She was keen on some man. I'd overheard her and her sister talk about him, talk about the mesh of hair on his chest, and probably she wanted to look healthy for him. She had a pasty face but could look good at night, in lamplight. Her beauty showed up more in the evening.

On that bicycle ride there was a distinguished look to her, in her purple, dark purple tweed, and a brooch that looked like crystallized violets and that I coveted. From time to time she would ask very sweetly if I was enjoying myself. She could be sweet, they all could, when they wanted to, but one never knew when it would be.

It was out there it happened. I felt the saddle damp, but there was no rain, and then I felt my legs damp and thought I had wet myself from the fear, what with the cars and buses and lorries that roared past us. Luckily, she dismounted; I thought it was to crack another egg, but no, it was a breather, and also for me to see the electricity plant that had recently been



INPUT FROM THE FRONT OFFICE

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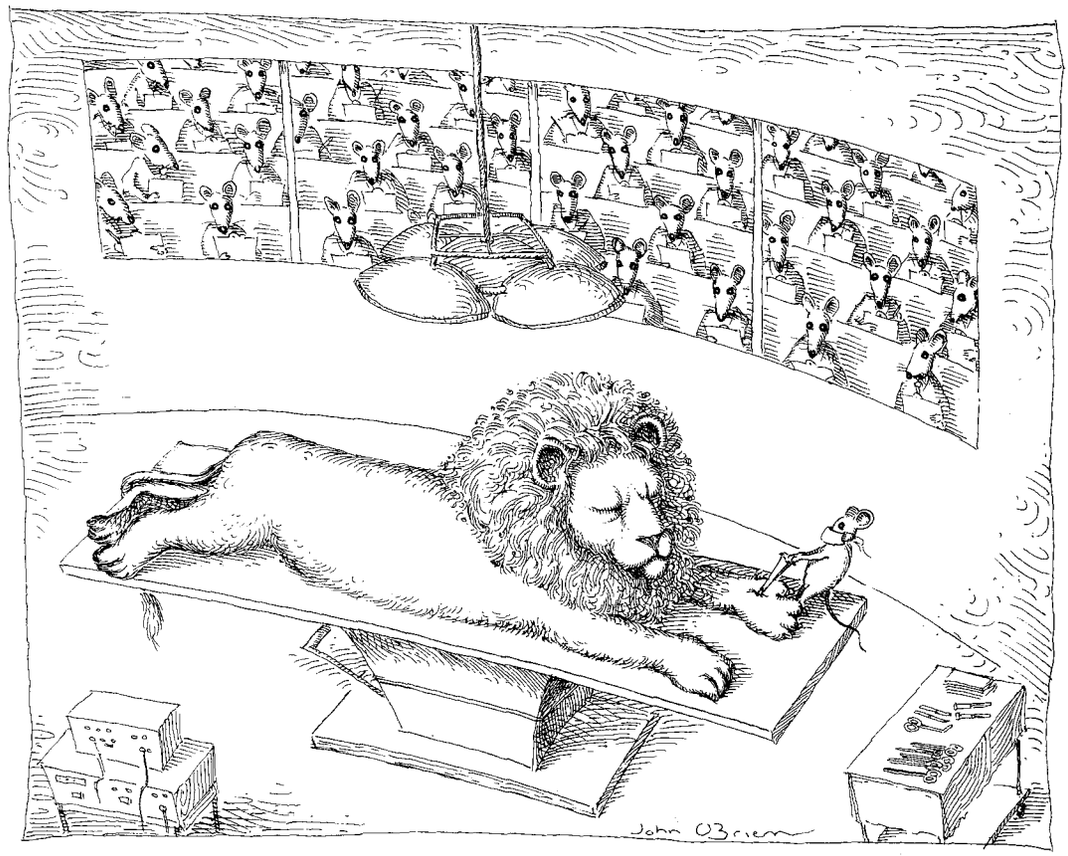
installed. To stand and look at this electricity installation was one of the stupidest things I could have imagined, since we knew nothing about it, but for me it was a chance to investigate this dampness. I slipped my hand under my frock, brought out the fingers, and saw blood.

"Sweet Jesus, blood!" I roared. She saw it and couldn't believe that I didn't know what it signified, that you hadn't told me, prepared me; she couldn't understand my hysteria. Oh, it was real hysteria. I wouldn't move. I stood with legs glued together to try to stop this awful flow, and, looking at the saddle, I vowed that I would not get back on it for anyone or anything, not even her, who I knew would bully me.

First she resorted to kindness, solicitude, said that we would go home and get napkins, the shop ones, not the cloth ones you use, but I refused, repeating that I would not budge from there. Then she tried to be sensible, said it was natural, a big moment, and that I was a woman now. Again she wondered why you had not told me. I had, of course, seen your napkins in the bowls of water, put there to soak, the water blood-red like the oil in the sanctuary lamp, but otherwise gory, profane. I did not know what gave them that hue, what butchery had gone on.

So there we were, beholding that electricity station, two or three miles from the center of the city—I simply refusing to mount the bicycle again and she talking twenty to the dozen now, imploring. I was not afraid of her. I was beyond fear, or rather had entered into a swoon of fear from which there was no escape. I believed the blood was flowing wildly and strangely out of me, and that if I moved the flow would lead to death, my own death, and to a memory, oh yes, a memory-death of something long before that was to do with your blood, to do with you and me. There is always another, a darker, secret beneath the surface of the secret we unearth. It came to me then that you did not have the heart to bear me and it has come to me now. These things are incontestable.



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Sometime around dawn Nell skulked out into the street, crept by houses and gardens that all seemed like fastnesses, all bleached white, like houses she had seen in a seaside town. The dew on each bit of garden and each wooden gateway gave them a silent, sealed-off look. It was all sea, her mind likewise. The cars, many dilapidated, lay like rusted, sullen beasts, parked grumpily and butting into one another. Had she met someone she might not have posted the letter, but she met no one, just saw the swath of a cat's tail lifting and lowering in some sort of bestial prance, and posted the letter, regretting it even as she was doing it, and yet exulting in the sudden realization that this would split them forever and that she would not be speaking to her mother again.

IN the lodging house where she and her boys were staying, the phone on the landing was for all the guests. Hearing her name called she perked up, thought it was a surprise of some sort, a suitor. But no. It was a chastened voice, a voice from home, a woman, Maisie, a neighbor of theirs who milked cows and loved to engage passersby. Bad news. Terrible news. Her mother had died, suddenly, that morning, after feeding the chickens and the sucky calves. Died on the flag, fell down across the steps, gashing one side of her neck and jaw.

"Did she die from the fall?" Nell asked, stunned at the prostrate vision.

"No, love, her poor heart gave out," the woman said, and launched into a spiel about how her mother had been to Mass that very morning, had saluted people on her way out, and bought a loaf of fresh bread, which she never had a bite of.

"Her poor heart gave out," she said again.

"I killed her," Nell said, too softly to be overheard.

They were waiting for her: her stricken father was waiting, her mother's remains were waiting, everyone was waiting. In her mind there ran a host of excuses, because she did not want to see them—if she saw them she would break down, admit to her crime. But limply, obediently she heard herself say that she would arrange for the children to go to a neighbor, catch the early-morning plane, and presently be with them to do everything she could. It was in this divided and demented state that she travelled and was met by the driver, who mauled her hand in sympathy and said, "Sorry for your troubles, missus."

Her father fell over her, groaning, shouting, calling her "darling," saying, "Darling, we lost the best friend we ever had." But that was not so. There was enmity between her and her mother, between her mother's effluvia and her own. The only way to come through it undetected was to say nothing. The house was damp throughout, walls and windows were

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damp, and in the lavatory the strong smell of disinfectant made her retch. Her father waited outside for her to rejoin him. She was all he had now. A helper had put a green bow around a new roll of lavatory paper. Out of sight of him, she talked to herself, told herself to pull through, to pull through, not let the bejeebies show. They could recur at any minute—a face peering out of something inanimate, such as the doorknob, or disembodied eyes, staring at her with unwonted grief, her mother's eyes. Once she found the letter she would confiscate it and keep it till her own old age; she could not read it now.

In the kitchen there was a bustle, women making sandwiches in preparation for the mourners who would come in after the "remains" were taken to the chapel. They referred to the body as remains, not as her mother. They had put a gauze scarf around the wound, Maisie had told her that. The sandwiches were egg-filled, with mayonnaise and bits of onion. In the chapel, men mashed her hand to convey their sympathy, and the women's embraces were crushing. "Sorry for your troubles," she heard, hundreds of times, but they did not know. No one knew but herself. She was the criminal, who had to pretend. The chapel, too, had its own signs of dereliction. There was an old crisscross bird's nest hanging askew from one of the rafters, and the flowers on the altar were pitiful, just bits of evergreen. The wreaths on the coffin were mostly artificial, calcified, a mimicry of what flowers should be, trumpets of death. Not once did she weep; her heartbeat seemed to stop, but that was because she was so afraid.

Later, the mourners sat around the breakfast-room table, chewing the sandwiches and condoling, all pleading with her as if she could in some way resuscitate them. They plied her with questions, endless questions about shops in London and the prices of food, and she answered routinely, her eyes taking in all the features of the sad room: the cold grate, with its heap of ashes over which cigarette butts were flung; dust congealed on the buttons of the corduroy-covered armchair, scums of it on the picture frames, and letters everywhere, but not the one she wanted. She must find it; she must. Every time she stirred, someone made her sit down: they engulfed her; they needed her cheer. One admired the fitted dress she wore, and another said, "There was no need to gild the lily." She thought that if they had had the merest inkling of her conduct in London they would lock her up, which was why she must go home immediately, invent some emergency, be deaf to her father's entreaties to stay. Her father drank his tea from a saucer, dipped a currant biscuit in it, and kept groaning, with the neighbors trying to hush him, reminding him of the good years—his wife a queen, their beautiful house, their harvests, his wife a daily communicant, the chutneys she made. A rug was put over him to comfort him, a rug which he threw off like a rearing colt. He needed a doctor, an injection, a tonic, anything to take him out of his misery. He roared. He roared as an animal might, and when he refused to stop the women took turns clamping their hands over his mouth, saying he was going too far, too far altogether.

"Pa-thet-ic," one of the neighbors said, a pedantic man who wanted to talk to her. He had written an archeological history of the parish, had sent it to her to read, but without success. She had not acknowledged it.

"I'm so sorry," she said lamely.

"Oh, we're nobodies, nobodies," he said, staring at the cut-glass cruet.

One of the women put a crushed sleeping pill in her father's saucer of tea and made him drink it, so that, not long after, he began to droop, and they carried him upstairs to bed, undressed him, save for his flannel drawers, and laid him out on the side of the bed that was nearest the door.

"Poor creature, poor man," Maisie said, reading his plight from his grazed shins and the state of the room.

"Will you stay the night?" Nell whispered to Maisie on the landing.

"Don't worry, darling, your mam is gone to God," Maisie said.

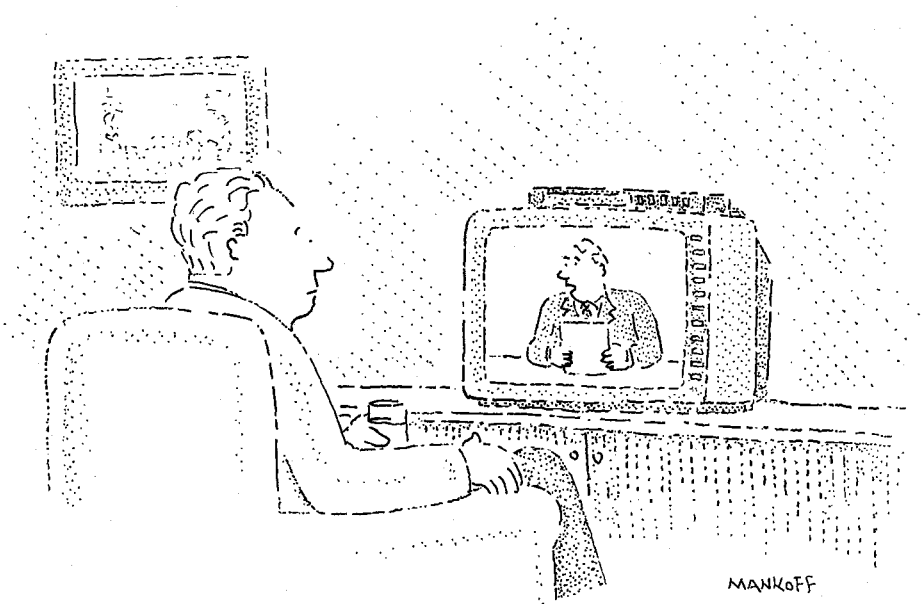
"I want you to have her lizard handbag," Nell said. It was a way of keeping Maisie for the night, because she loved stylish things, even though she never wore them. She tried to duck out of it, said she would be back at dawn before they wakened, back with warm scones.

"I'm afraid," Nell said.

"Afraid of what, love?"

"Afraid of my father," Nell said, and Maisie thought a moment and gave a wink of collusion.

The damp oozed out of the sheets and eiderdowns, so they had to get out of bed and dress themselves and get back in again. Maisie made her go with her to the lavatory. They were both petrified now. In bed, Maisie told her own sad story. Nell's mother hadn't talked to her for nearly a year. It was over a spoon, a missing egg spoon. Her mother had loaned Maisie a set for the plowing-match dinner, twelve spoons in a box, a purple box with a faded velvet lining and a little recess for each spoon, and one got lost—had probably got thrown away, emptied with the skins—and could not be found, though Maisie herself searched high and low, even raked the ash bed, and in the end



"In Washington today, the sun rose over Capitol Hill and received broad bipartisan support."

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sent a youngster back with the eleven spoons and no note. Nell's mother was bucking, said it was daylight robbery, and did not speak to Maisie again.

"I wish we'd made up," Maisie said, sobbing. Across the landing they could hear her father's cries; the whole house was crying, and soon the dog joined in from her burrow under the hedge. She had refused food and milk since the woman of the house went. First it was a low sort of whine, then it swelled, rousing neighboring dogs for miles around, who answered back and soon began to run from their own lairs, their barking hectic as they got nearer and nearer. Soon they ringed the house, first fighting, then barking in chorus—an anthem for a dead woman. Not long after came the sound of a car, brakes coming to a sudden standstill, and a banging door.

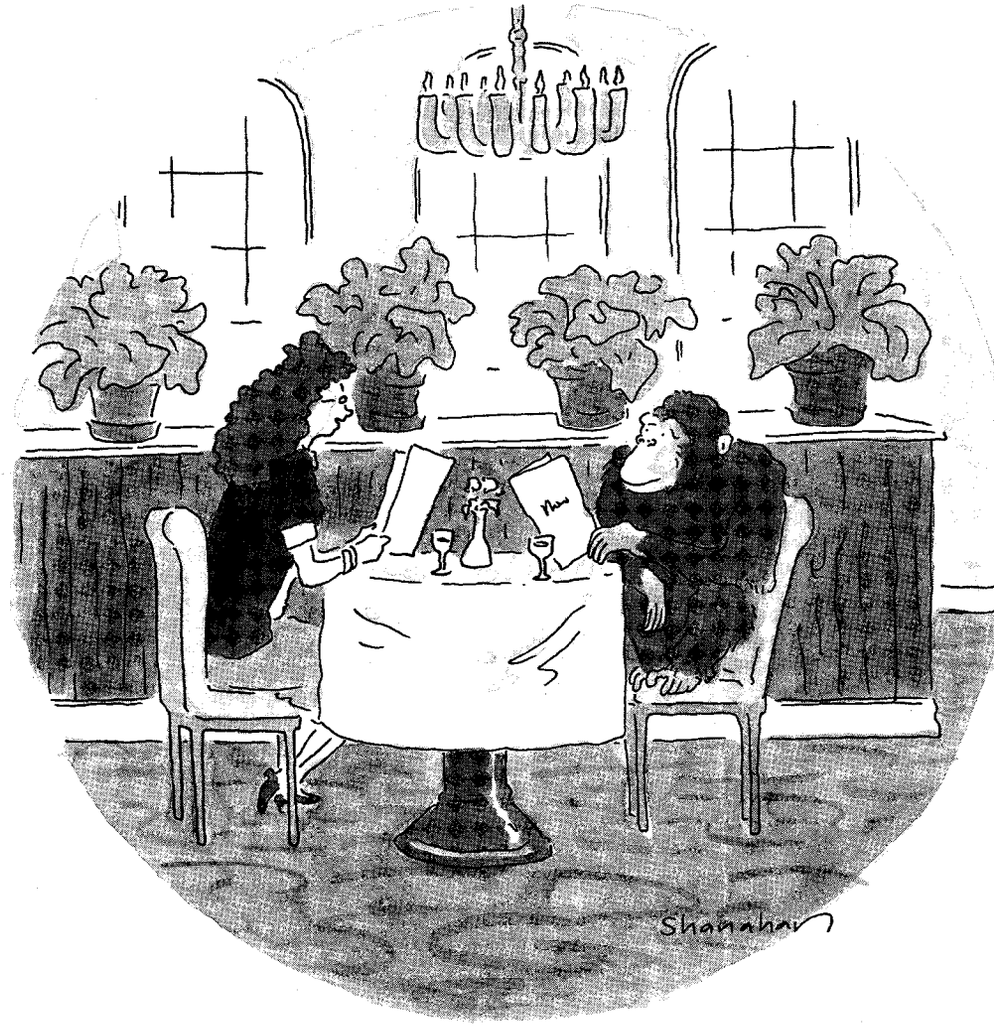
"Cripes, it's the doctor," Maisie said. They had called him earlier in the evening for Nell's father's fits, only to be told that he was away and might not be back for the night, was at some card party or other.

Nell saw him from the top of the stairs, his big, red, beaming face, and his body swaying proudly—a would-be swain in a wide fawn suit that was stained and crumpled. His spirits rose as he caught sight of her, dressed again, as if for travel, and her hair pinned up.

"Gorgeous, gorgeous," he said.

"He's stocious," Maisie whispered under her breath, and she ran to tell him that they didn't need him now, that Nell's father was sound asleep. He refused to go, said he wanted a chinwag with Nell, and Maisie, ever beholden, slunk away, thanking him for coming. Taking Nell's arm, he marched down the hall toward the kitchen, where he knew the stove would be on, saying that he never thought when he got up that morning he would be sitting down with her that night.

"Ergo, it was meant," he said, and searched for drink, knew where the tonic-wine was hidden and where the cut-glass tumblers were. He sat back, gloried in her presence and the lucky chance that brought him, swigged the drink and talked of urbane things, races he had been to, hunt meetings he had been to, even a damned cup he had won, which was on his mantelpiece at home.



"Frances tells me you're a communications major."

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"I'd love you to see it," he said proudly, and then recalled how as a young girl she had craved sugarplums, and how one day he brought her a basket of red ones, soft and squishy as Turkish delights.

"You were crazy about me," he said, nudging her.

"Was I?" she said, embarrassed. She remembered saying recitations often for him and another man when they were tiddly, then pestering him in the autumn for the sugarplums, and she was ashamed of it now.

Did she know that his wife was dead? His dear wife, his darling Annie? She knew, her mother had said so. So Nell knew everything? She nodded as he recited the saga of his falling in love, yes, falling in love with a young chit of a girl, and now they had a baby, which the young girl passed off as her married sister's. Woeful. Woeful. Love was a terrible thing, made men irresponsible. What was love, he asked her then, his pale eyes in mid-expression between tears and laughter. It was as if a lewd thought had possessed him, which perhaps it had, because he added rakishly, "Where does it reside? Is it in the backside?"

This philandering, as she could guess, had made him unpopular, made for enemies, so that a young pup of a doctor, a locum, had moved in, stolen his practice—here he wept as he said that decent people such as herself and her family still trusted him, knew that he was of the old brigade. There was no stopping him. His chair came nearer and nearer, and she knew that soon he would touch her, fondle her knee. His eyes were full of tears now; they were like jellyfish floundering about in their bloodshot sockets. He was shaking. He was shaking from drink and desire, gloating in the onslaught of memories—the innocent memories, like the

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sugarplums and her arch recitations, and the later times, his dalliances, then his going off the rails. What was his meat now? Shambles. The young one was playing around, oh, yes, deceiving him, playing around with a forester, in the forest. Every day, he went to his wife's grave, or certainly every other day, and pleaded, said, "It's the same fucking story, Annie." Then he put his hand on Nell's and asked her for God's sake to comfort him, because he was running on empty. Three or four times he said it, as if he enjoyed saying it: "running on empty." His mind stretched back to the very first day when he rode into the village on his bicycle, newly qualified, without a penny, but rich in ideals, yes, ideals. He had come to the parish long before the cottages, the factory, and the pebble-dash bungalows were built, when there was only the workhouse with its boarded windows and the town with its handful of people, whom he had come to save, meaning to wipe out every disease, every fucking disease that there was.

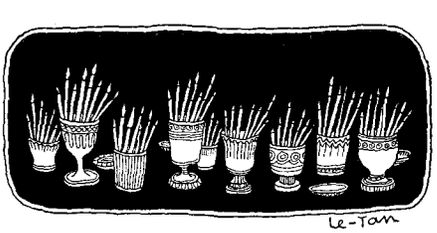
"Like an Apostle," he said, then reached for more drink and repeated the story of his recent blow, how that very morning he had found a gift under the young one's bed, a gift that was not from him, a pair of fur-lined gloves, no less, which she denied were hers, expressing bafflement as to how they came to be there. But everyone in the parish knew; his dirty linen was being washed in public yet again. "Do you get my drift?" he said, pleading, pleading.

Yes, she knew what he was saying, knew the bungle of his life and how completely stuck he was, like a machine she had seen earlier in the day, when she'd taken a walk, an old mowing machine that had broken down and been left to sink into the soggy ground, moss and ivy throttling it, its few spears up in the air, defiant and grotesque. Yes, she knew, but she remained cold, cold as the domed artificial flowers on the coffin, cold as porcelain.

"What can one do?" she said, her voice matter-of-fact, not the voice he craved. He repelled her and he knew he repelled her, grew more tetchy, saying wild, inappropriate, suggestive things.

In the end she had to ask him to go. He stood up, taking umbrage, staggered, said it stood to reason, she being a city person now, having better fish to fry, having no time for them, no time for him, a country doctor running on empty. "Oh, tooraloom, tooraloom," he said, and danced to a vicious tempo of his own.

NEXT morning after breakfast, she decided to do a thorough search. It was somewhere. She had searched in the ashes, but there was no trace of a charred letter, only ashes and cinders and cigarette butts.



"Can't you sit," her father said, seeing her stir.

"She's looking for her darling mother," Maisie said to keep the peace. Nell believed that if she found the letter she would know by the way it was folded or crumpled if it had killed her mother. Also she clung to straws. Perhaps her mother did not understand it—perhaps it was too highfalutin, or the writing was illegible, vowels and consonants slithering off the page like knitting coming off a needle. She had written it in a mad rage, a bout

A HOME

Raised, he said, not at home but in a Home.

Bare of associations, words like "bed,"
"Breakfast," and "birthday" hard eternal forms
As standardized as workbench in the shop,
Or regulation metal bunk, with edges
On which you bark your shins because it's there.

Bare of associations.
Between the boys
Contact not loose, not free, consisting mainly
In the wrestling down of slave by slave. Call this
The economy of bruises: threats of worse
Pin you in place for more convenient handling.
And nothing occurs casually but dirt.

So when a big boy slips you a comic book
Because his heart is big, no other reason,
His unfit action organizes time.

It organizes time through revelation
Of an old prophecy preserved in fragments
Among the boys, a corrupt oral tradition
Concerning the advent of the affections: for
They will be born, and live and prosper too,
Before their inevitable martyrdom.
Your mind starts to prepare a place for them:

And it delights in the cool, newfound ease
With which it slips the habitual weary tautness
To enter certain unmapped borderlands.
Waking early
in the breathing room of beds
To thin unsupervised light, a sanctuary,
You glimpse at last a measure of the future,
In which you will seek out similar times
Between times, places between places, thresholds
And fire escapes, buses and laundromats,
To tell in a voice guarded and level, "I
Was raised in a Home," as if it were all over
And the quotidian horror had been mastered.

—THOM GUNN

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of revenge. She did not remember signing it, so it could have come from anyone. She did not remember posting it, but post it she did and afterward went to an all-night shop and flirted with the young assistant there, to prove something to herself. This was the Nell her children did not know, must not know. They were thinking of her now, missing her, maybe in dread that she would not return. Her father was by the fire asking if she would stay with him, or if he could come back with her. One or other it had to be.

"We'll see, we'll see," she kept saying. She was rummaging in the holdall now, the holdall that held everyday clues to her mother, time-worn clues, bills, recipes, a small credit note from a drapery shop, mortuary cards with photos of friends, beseeching photos and beseeching verse. Her father and herself, too, would choose a mortuary card for her mother and dispatch it to friends and mourners. And there would be a tombstone. At moments he discussed it—a tombstone that not many would see, because the grave was on an island. The ruins of a monastery and a stone oratory from the tenth century stood nearby with a plaque identifying them and giving the names of the monks who had fasted and prayed there. The butcher hired the grazing, and so bullocks romped and fattened on the island. She could be buried there herself in due course; there was a space for her, next to her parents. The thought made her quake.

The post was delivered around ten o'clock: that she knew; that she had found out. Her mother had died at around eleven. She had gone up to feed the hens and the calves, had come down and died on the flag, the top half of her keeling over on a step like a tilting statue. That she knew.

"Was she upset about something?" Nell asked, feigning innocence.

"How would I know?" her father said, and went on to cite a ravaged man, himself, who had gone out to count cattle and had come back to find this heap, this pitiful heap, her skull half open and the dog there, beside the blood, moaning.

In the dresser Nell found pots of jam and apple jelly with mold on them, and letters she'd written, earlier letters, pinched, discreet. She thought she had come upon the one she was looking for in the orange bowl with the mesh top, because of spotting a royal-blue envelope. But all her envelopes were that royal blue, which she chose for some fanciful reason, imagining them to bring only gaieties.

Perhaps it was upstairs. Opening the linen cupboard, she let out a scream as she caught sight of an animal, a baby fox, that looked at her before vanishing and by its glare said, "You have killed your mother; you have slaughtered her." When she found the gifts under the towels, she felt a gnawing pity. They were gifts for her and her young. They were handmade wallets with their names on them. The thonging was too thick, and the leather was not soft, but they were gifts. She saw, as well, bottles of blackberry wine with screw-on caps and, for an instant, unnerved by the fox, pictured lanes and briers in September, her mother kneeling, looking for blackberries, picking the sweet juices of the countryside for her.

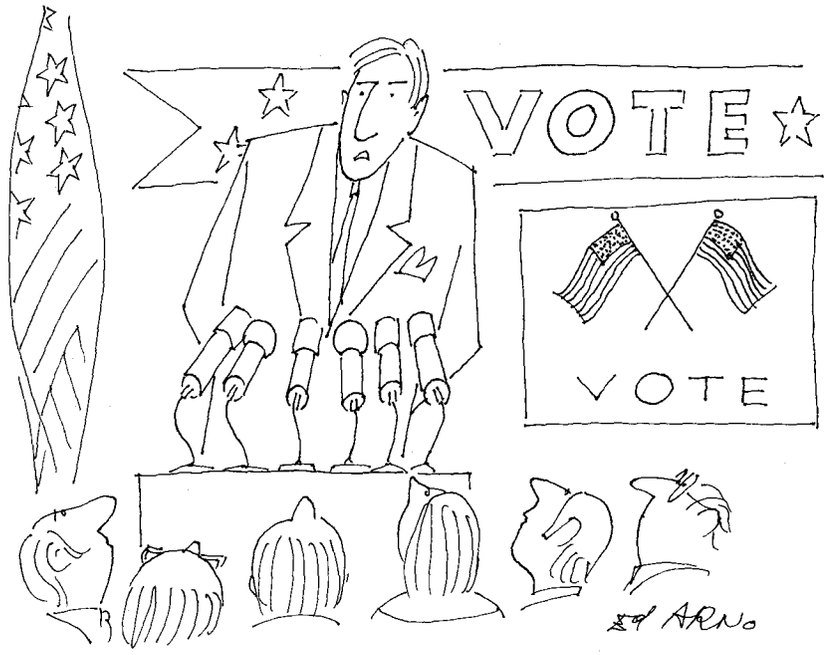
It would be under her mother's mattress, that was where it would be. She ran, found the crucifix, the one her mother had slept with and held in the crook of her hand in times of tribulation, found a letter from an old friend who said she was going blind, yet her children had deserted her and showed not an ounce of pity. She saw bloodstains, too—one huge bloodstain that had formed the shape of a fish, and lesser ones. She could taste blood then, feel it going down her throat like a warm, rank cordial.

Suddenly she looked up and saw red streaks in the sky, red streaks that for some reason brought tears to her eyes, as if something beautiful, profound, and sorrowful were being explained in this silent tableau. Beneath the red streaks was a swath of purple, gently hazed, trailing like lilac chiffon, then dropping down to a basin of gray-white that filtered into lonely invisibility. It was November, the shriving month, the month when the creatures in Purgatory cried out to the living for intercession. A stray beam of light that then passed over the knob of the brass bed gave her the shivers, as if it were the gasp of a passing soul. She had never dwelt on death, had shrunk from it, but knew from her prayer books that judgment is given on the very spot where the soul is separated from the body. She should kneel down and talk to her mother, follow her soul's route, ask forgiveness, say a prayer, but she was unable; she fled from the room, genuflecting as she went.

"What the hell are you doing upstairs?" her father called.

"Nothing, nothing," she said as she trotted down.

His temper was just on the boil. He



"If indicted, I will not stand trial; if convicted, I will not serve time."

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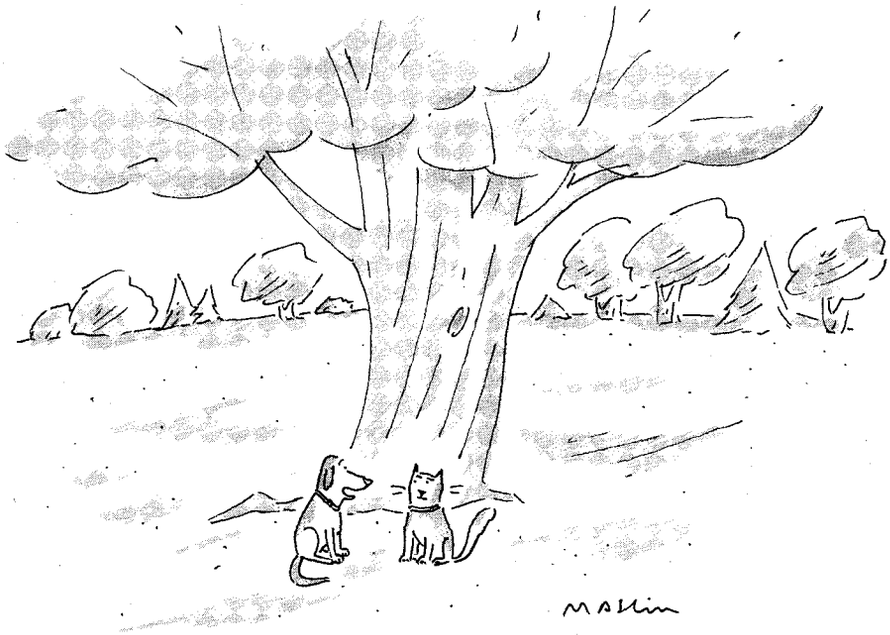

"You realize I'm taking an enormous personal as well as professional risk just being seen with you."

• •

could not understand why she lived in England; he had gone there as a young fellow, after his pleurisy, thought it the most god-awful friendless place he had ever set foot in. She was to take her mother's jewelry, did she know that? Yes, she knew. She had found the tortoiseshell casket with the few trinkets, trinkets that had once seemed priceless—a square black ring with a diamond in its center, another with stones like pale-blue flowers. She thanked him. She was a child masquerading as a grownup. He was a child, too. Her own children could not be mentioned, as if they were rivals for her hand. Again she started in on the questions about her mother's last hours.

"Holy Jesus, you have my heart scalded," he said, stood up, and with his fist swiped the air, which he would have beaten with his ashplant were it to hand. Afterward he had to have a spoonful of his tonic. Maisie had come in during this contretemps, come in with newly washed linen, and the sight of it, along with its fresh smell, was so wholesome that it seemed as if all blood, all bloodshed had been washed away. Maisie had brought his clean shirts, clean handkerchiefs, and a bolster case. Like a magician, she undid the knot of a napkin, allowing warm buttered scones to come tumbling out. Maisie was humoring him, as she knew how. His missus, she claimed, had had the biggest crowd ever to the chapel, broke the record, had had up to a thousand, not including cars and bicycles. The postman had counted them. Maybe Nell could ask the postman—yes, he would know.

"Do you hear that?" he said to Nell. She heard it. He was willing her to hear it so he could ask her again either if she would stay or if he could come back with her. Knowing she was going to refuse, he cried and wished himself dead, said he had always been an orphan, a foundling, and seeing him so pitiful, so shorn of love, she put out her hand to let him hold it, to bask in the comfort of it. More than anything she wished that she could love him, and she knew that for as long as she didn't her life was in a balk.

"There, there," she said, allowing him to pummel her hand, to infer tenderness, solidarity, and, moved as he was by this, he redescribed coming in the gate, seeing her poor mother and thinking she had fainted from the fasting or had ripped a varicose vein on a bucket, going to her and picking her up and trying to give her back her breath.

"Oh, the creature, the look on her face, the growl on her mouth," he said, and enacted picking her up, and then, as he broke down, Nell saw that he had loved his wife with a raw, violent kind of love, and that this was his only sustenance, the only thing he could cling to. She would have liked then to have poured her heart out, to tell him how afraid of him she had been—his shouting, his boots, the very click of the latch as he opened the door—and to tell him her abiding fear, which was that all other men, no matter what their characters or their voices, were shadows of him whom she was afraid of, and because she was afraid of them she was unnatural and beholden, an outcast from the very intimacy that she most craved. Her mother had never been a shield, perhaps out of fear, or maybe something darker. Near as each of them was to the others, in their bristle and in their enmity, they knew nothing at all about one another's deepest, most tender feelings, and shrunk from the contemplation of them. Only by living inside cages and growling at each other as animals might could they manage at all.

"I'll stay a week," she said. It was all she could say.

"So it's the bare road after that," he said as he looked through the damp, darkened window at the damp, steamy fields beyond. He would take to it. He would walk to houses and public houses, retrace old paths, hailing people in their cabbage gardens or at crossroads to tell the story of his wife's sudden death, his consequent loneliness, and then he would drink with them or drink without them, and before a year was out he would be beside his wife in the isolated graveyard over which the bullocks romped.

"What's that?" they each said, and gaped, too frightened to stir. It was Maisie who ventured first, crossing to open a door in the room across the hall—the best room, the shrine, full of ornaments. An oval gilt mirror had fallen, face down, to the hearth. It fell because the cord was brown and rotted, but—occurring as it did that night, when their minds were centered on death—the shattering had an extra, terrifying significance. Maisie went to pick the shards up, then laid them on the table with solemnity, as if the mirror, too, were a corpse, and said, with some vestige of cheer, "I'll glue it together."

By their eyes they told one another that the haunting had begun. Three people, united by the selfsame fear and separated by greater ones too terrible to countenance. —EDNA O'BRIEN

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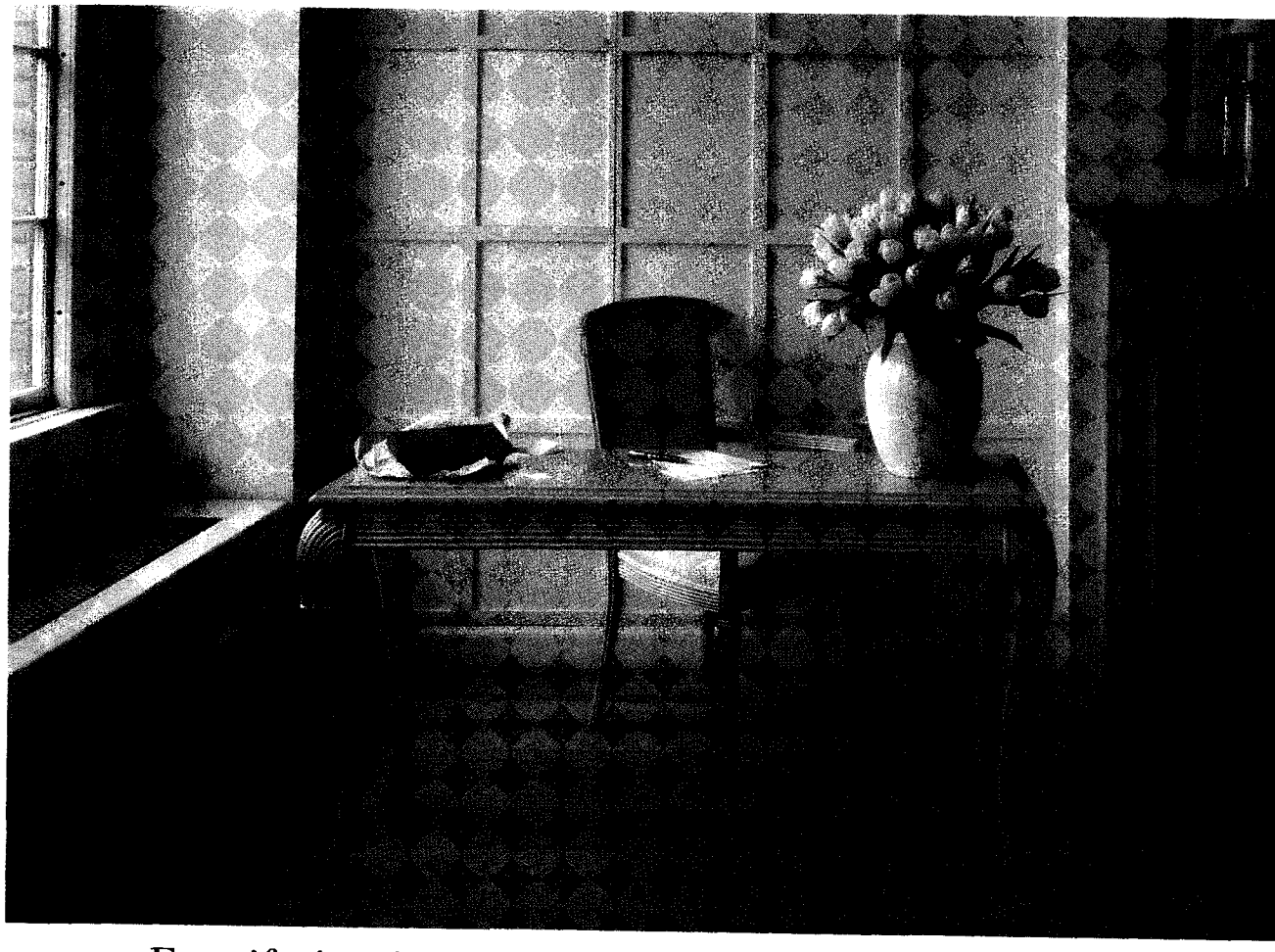

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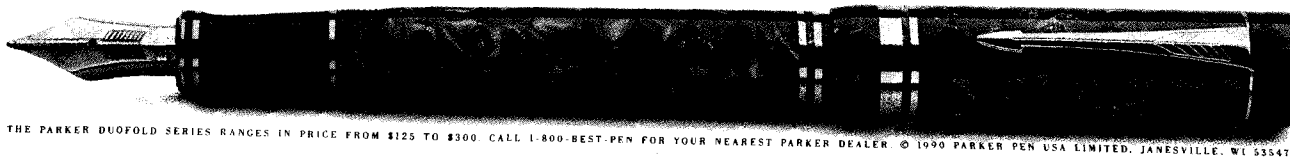

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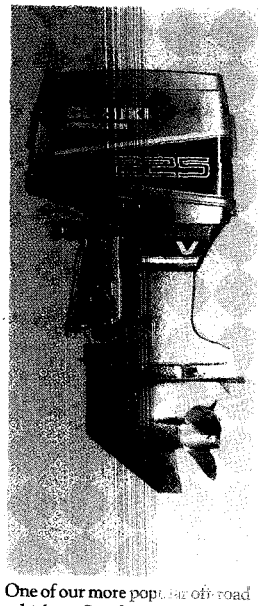

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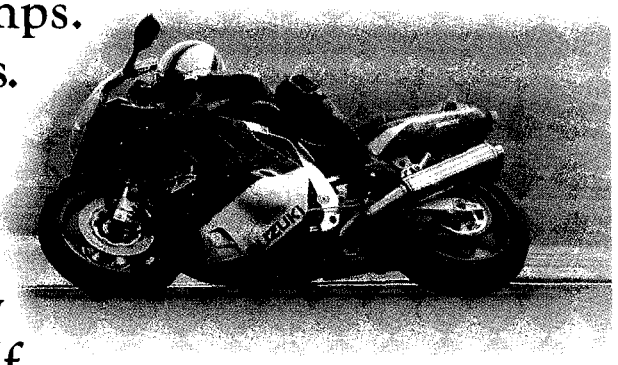

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REPORT FROM MOSCOW

THE COUP

FOR Colonel Aleksandr Valerianovich Tsalko, a helicopter pilot in the Soviet Army, the failed coup in Moscow in August was the culmination of a period of imperial decline that began in 1979. Until that year, Tsalko never questioned Communism. He was born in Byelorussia in 1946, on a collective farm named for a Bolshevik war hero, Semyon Budyonny. His parents did not care for the system, Tsalko told me one morning in late August. His mother quietly disparaged it. "She was a peasant woman, and a religious believer, and she simply didn't accept it," he said. He shrugged, reënacting the condescending indifference he had been taught to feel toward his mother and other people born too soon to appreciate Communism. "I thought she was old, she was not sensible."

No one lives in Tsalko's native village now, because of radiation from Chernobyl, which is about forty miles away. But in his boyhood the village abounded in evidence of the vitality and righteousness of the Soviet cause. Battle ruins—mementos of the triumph over Fascism—littered the Byelorussian countryside. In the evenings, the men of the collective farm would tell stories about the partisan underground during the years of Nazi occupation. In the daytime, young Tsalko and his friends would play Nazis versus partisans, always vying to be chosen for the partisan side. "You have to understand that we're children of our time and system," the Colonel said. "If you go through that moral cultivation from the first year in school, you believe without doubts at all. We children—my sister and I—were extreme Communists."

At seventeen, Tsalko faced a choice: he could submit to the draft, serve a couple of years as a soldier, and, in all likelihood, return to the collective farm or he could become an officer. He chose the latter course, and enrolled in a training institute for military aviators. Tsalko is a short, slight man with a wrinkled forehead, and the rest of his head is bald but for a fringe of red hair. He is brusque and intense, with fingernails bitten short. When we met, he was wearing a baggy gray suit and off-white socks. In an American movie, he might be cast as a junior-high-school Latin teacher. In reality, however, he became one of the outstanding Soviet combat pilots of his generation, a specialist in flying helicopters. He joined the Communist Party in 1971 and then served six years in the Far East. After that, he was selected for advanced training at the Yuri Gagarin Military Air Academy, near Moscow—a sign that his career was moving along well.

In 1979, the Army promoted him to lieutenant colonel and put him in charge of a special detachment of helicopters and pilots, with headquarters near Moscow. "It was the helicopter pool—the taxi pool, as we called it," he told me. "We flew the command staff of the Ministry of Defense. I took them everywhere. I saw them close up." To describe what he saw, Tsalko used a phrase deliberately drawn from the vocabulary of pre-revolutionary Russia: "It was my first time at court."

The waste he saw appalled him. "They never even counted what they were spending," he said. "In order for the Minister of Defense to go to the Far East, we had to ferry out a special helicopter, specially equipped, with the best pilots. He'd use it out there for an hour. He couldn't use the regular helicopters, because they weren't maintained so well. Enormous resources were spent on supplying this *verkhushka*"—the word means "top layer"—"while the rest of the Army lived in terrible poverty. Pilots might not have apartments, or heat in the barracks. The *verkhushka* all had nice dachas. They had no problem with apartments."

"You Tarzan?"

The character and the attitude of the *verkhushka* particularly galled Tsalko. Twelve years later, he became angry again just thinking about it. "The crudeness! Every senior boss was always humiliating his subordinates." Tsalko found that the *verkhushka*, especially

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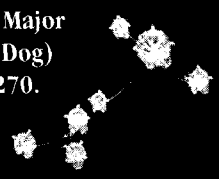

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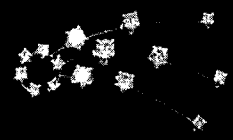

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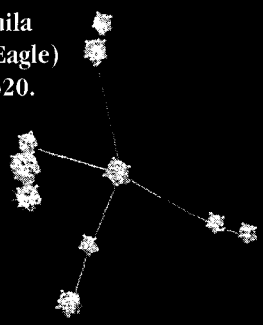

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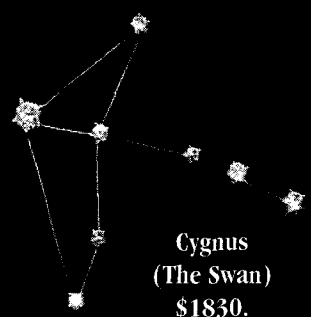

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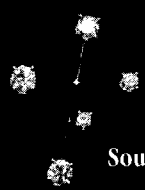

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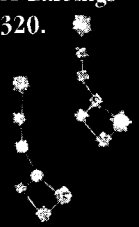

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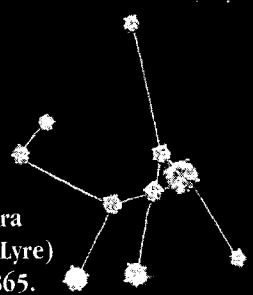

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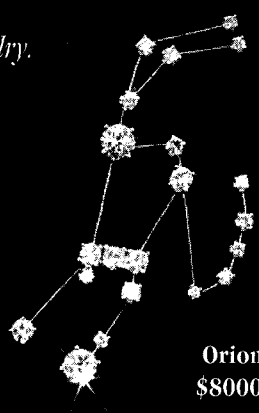

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General Pyotr Lushev, the district commander, freely cursed subordinates and used the singular form of "you" in addressing them. That form is usually reserved for intimate friends, children, and pets, and its use in other contexts connotes disrespect. (In 1917, mutinous Bolshevik soldiers had forced czarist officers to stop addressing them that way.) "Lushev paid no attention to me, as if I were a piece of furniture," Tsalko said. "But I'm a man, too. And I see."

After three years of this duty, Tsalko desperately wanted a new assignment. He volunteered for Afghanistan. "I went there with sincere faith," he said. "I thought that it was an unjust war, but from your side." He pointed at me and snorted quietly. The Army put Tsalko in command of an airborne regiment based at Kandahar. "We had a lot of different assignments," he recalled. "Reconnaissance. Transport operations. Supply operations. Search-and-destroy missions against ground targets." He paused. "It lies on my conscience."

Tsalko, I had heard from other officers, developed a reputation as an effective commander who used his men carefully, instead of throwing them blindly into the hills after the guerrillas. I asked him about that reputation, and he acknowledged it. "The regiment fought well, in general, and it had few losses," he said. "One crew was shot down and another crashed. That was a low loss rate. The regiment was decorated, and I got the Order of the Red Banner."

But as the months went by in Afghanistan his uneasiness grew. After a while, he realized why. "I knew all too well what a partisan war looked like—the reasons it arose and how it was conducted. The Afghan war was extraordinarily similar to a partisan war—to the war that the heroes of my childhood had fought." This time, though, he could not insist on playing the role of the partisan, as he and his friends had done back on the Semyon Budyonny Collective Farm. He was stuck on the other side. "That caused me tremendous doubt," he said. "Something wasn't right. It wasn't a war against American imperialism. It was a war against the Afghan people. It was, morally speaking, something absolutely different from what I had expected. The futility was clear. We couldn't win. There could only be a political outcome."

In 1985, as Tsalko was completing his tour in Afghanistan, Mikhail Gorbachev succeeded Konstantin Chernenko as General Secretary of the Communist Party, ending a period in which doddering old men led the country and the economy stagnated. Tsalko felt that the change was overdue. "I had realized that the perpetual succession of one old idiot after another would turn out badly," he told me. "The change should have happened earlier."

Tsalko became part of the upheaval that Gorbachev unleashed. In 1989, he ran for the Congress of People's Deputies. "The people nominated me," Tsalko said. "The Army political organs came out hard against me. They said I was an extremist, a dangerous man. They only discredited themselves." He won the election, and went to Moscow intent on reforming the Party—on getting rid of the rest of its old leaders and democratizing it. Over the next two years, as he watched the Party conservatives check most of the reformers' initiatives, he decided that reforming the Party was an illusion—that it was beyond reform.

By the beginning of this year, Tsalko had begun to feel like a man at a dead end. Within the Congress, he and a small group of officers who agreed with him felt increasingly isolated as Gorbachev brought in conservatives like Gennady Yanayev and Boris Pugo—as Vice-President and Minister of Internal Affairs, respectively. The reformers advocated a much smaller, professional Soviet Army, with perhaps a million and a half soldiers instead of more than three million conscripts. The *verkhushka* dismissed their proposals.

But *perestroika* had been creating new power centers beyond the control of the *verkhushka*. In 1990, over Gorbachev's opposition, Boris Yeltsin won a close vote and became chairman of the Supreme Soviet, or parliament, of the Russian Republic. Yeltsin took over the old republic bureaucracy, which had been an inert subsidiary of the central government, and began to turn it into a government of Russian reformers. In April of 1991, Tsalko became a deputy chairman of Yeltsin's

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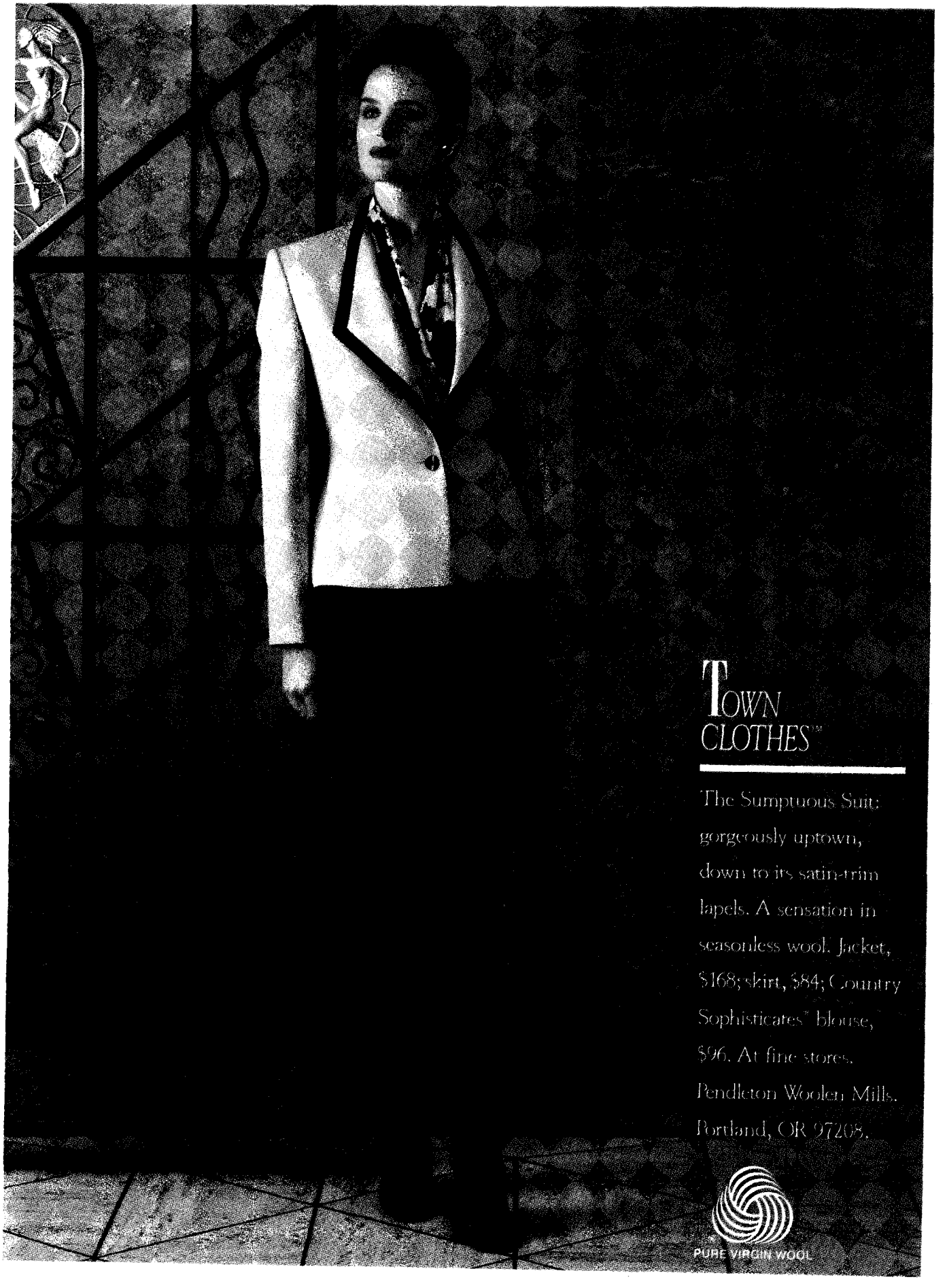

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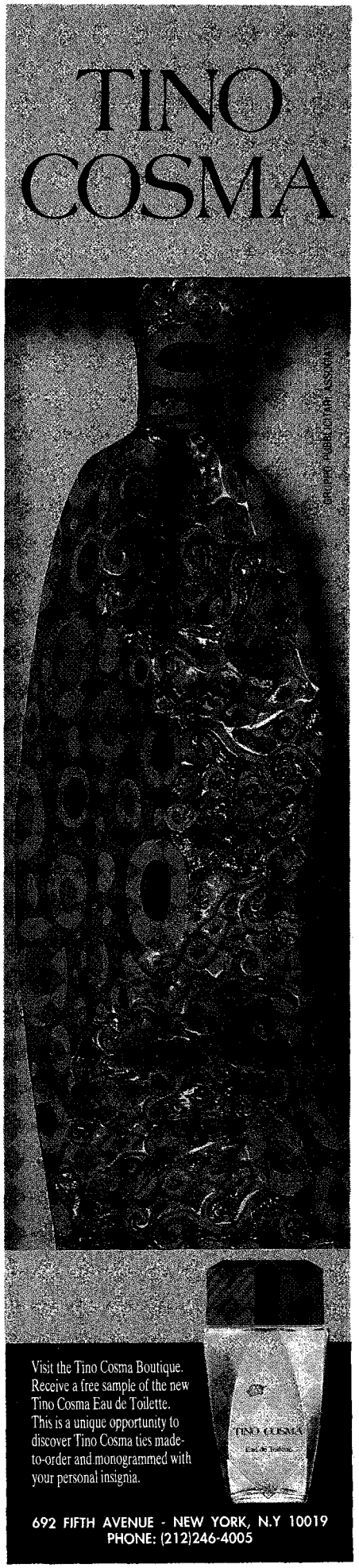

embryonic defense ministry, called the State Committee on Defense Issues. Two months later, he quit the Party. "You see," he explained, "because of what I had become, I had to go into the Russian government when it was created. Before that, there had been nowhere to go."

Yeltsin cleverly persuaded the Russian legislature to schedule a quick popular election for President of the Republic, the first such election in Russia's history. His overwhelming victory, in June, was a turning point. The election gave Russia more than a legitimately elected non-Communist government; it gave Russians the vague outline, at least, of a new perception of themselves.

This new perception even changed the way Muscovites referred to the enormous office building on the bank of the Moscow River, a mile or so from the Kremlin, which housed Yeltsin's government. The building, a product of the Brezhnev era, is a graceless twelve-story white oval tower standing on a broad, six-story pedestal. In spirit, if not in style, it mirrors the huge, Stalin-Gothic Hotel Ukraina, across the river. In the days before *perestroika*, when friends of mine had occasion to refer to the building, they might give it its formal title—the House of Soviets of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, abbreviating the republic's name to R.S.F.S.R. Or, more likely, they would call it Solomentsev's, or Vorotnikov's, using the name of whichever lesser Politburo member happened to be in charge of the republic's bureaucracy at the time. But after Yeltsin's election I began to hear it called, with a hint of tentative pride, "our White House," or just "the White House."

Tsalko was in the Hotel Moskva, his Moscow residence, on the morning of Monday, August 19th, when, at about nine o'clock, he learned that a group calling itself the State Committee on the Emergency Situation had announced Mikhail Gorbachev's removal from office because of illness. He immediately hopped on a bus heading toward the river and the White House, to see what he could do to help prepare its defense.

WHEN Aleksandr Tsalko arrived at the White House, Boris Yeltsin was already there—a circumstance that Tsalko's boss, Colonel General Konstantin Kobets, later told me he could explain only by crediting divine intervention. Kobets, who is fifty-two, looks the part of a Russian general. He has the body of a retired nose tackle, short and powerful; a head of thick brown hair; and blunt fingers. Yeltsin had recruited Kobets in January, to lead the State Committee on Defense Issues, and Kobets had, in turn, assembled a small staff of reform-minded officers, like Tsalko, and former officers; they all worked out of offices on the third and fourth floors of the White House. Kobets, as the committee chairman, had access to one of the dachas in the compound reserved for Russian Republic leaders at Arkhangelskoye, a village about fifteen miles west of Moscow. That was where he and Yeltsin (who had built his popularity, in part, on chastising Soviet officials for bestowing perquisites like dachas on themselves) and other Russian officials had spent the night of August 18th.

Kobets first heard radio reports of Gorbachev's illness and removal shortly after six o'clock Monday morning. He and the others, he told me, immediately realized that the illness was a sham and that a coup was in progress. He went to Yeltsin's dacha, and found the rest of the Russian Republic leadership gathering there. As Kobets recalled it, the men met for about forty-five minutes. They approved a statement, signed by Yeltsin, that accused the coup leaders of a "grave state crime" and urged police and soldiers not to obey them.

"We understood that it wasn't safe, so we had the meeting quickly, and we left around seven-thirty or seven-forty-five," Kobets said. "We left in our Volgas, and we took a completely different route from the one we usually take. By the time we got to the White House, a tank company from the Tamanskaya Division had arrived." Nevertheless, no one prevented the Russian leaders from entering their building.

Several weeks after the event, the failure of the coup leadership to arrest Yeltsin and the other Russian leaders remained inexplicable. Major General Viktor Karpukhin, the commanding officer of the Alpha Group, the K.G.B.'s anti-terrorist commando unit, told a reporter that he and his men had surreptitiously surrounded Yeltsin's compound before Yeltsin and his party

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left for Moscow, and that he had refrained from arresting Yeltsin, either then or later, for fear that a firefight with Yeltsin's bodyguards would kill innocent bystanders. Accounts given by other Alpha Group officers, though, do not mention surrounding Yeltsin's compound. The Alpha Group's post-coup interviews, in fact, have only one thing in common: in each case, the officer doing the talking tries to take credit for being the hero whose refusal to obey orders foiled the coup. Kobets leaned toward a simpler explanation: "My wife told me that about fifteen minutes after we left they came to arrest us. But the birds had flown. I think they had organizational problems."

Beyond question, the conspirators had enough time to arrest Yeltsin. One of the younger people on Kobets' staff, Dmitri Rosnin, told me that he first began to hear about unusual Army activity on Sunday morning, nearly twenty-four hours before Yeltsin arrived at the White House. "I was at home, in Moscow, on Sunday," Rosnin recalled. "A friend of mine who worked at the general staff called in the morning. He was the duty officer that day, but he was calling from a pay phone on the street. He said he'd heard whispers and rumors, unverified, that some of the officers were involved in preparing an action. He wanted to know if I had any information. I didn't believe it, and said that it was just nonsense."

One reason for Rosnin's attitude was the low opinion he had of the combat-readiness and the discipline in the Soviet Army. Rosnin is a rangy man, clean-cut, clear-eyed—the kind of man any Army might want to put on a recruiting poster. He is the grandson of a Soviet admiral and a graduate of one of the Soviet Union's Suvorov schools—a network of military boarding schools that was established in Stalin's time to mold boys into model Communist officers. When I first met Rosnin, several months before the coup, he told me how he had become disillusioned with the Army.

"In 1978, I finished the Suvorov school and went on to the Moscow Higher General Command School," he said. "I received the rank of lieutenant here on Red Square, at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. It was a solemn graduation ceremony. Afterward, we went to a restaurant and

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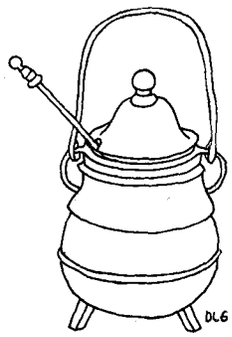
drank a lot and told stories. After a month of running around and drinking, I left for my first assignment, in Germany. It was still the German Democratic Republic, and I was assigned to a motorized rifle regiment. I became the commander of a platoon. Of course, they had taught us in school how to maintain discipline, what methods to use, when to write a report, how to give commands. But when I got to the troops I saw that not even ten per cent of that was followed, and that relationships between officers and soldiers, and between soldiers and soldiers, were not at all like what they had taught us. The first thing that hit you was how all of them were dirty. They all had foot problems—fungus—from worn-out boots and dirty socks. One would be long-haired, another would have his head shaved. Some had altered their uniforms by making the pants tight, and looked kind of homosexual—it gave them prestige, for some reason. The ones who swept and cleaned up were the young soldiers. They were downtrodden, oppressed, in old uniforms that didn't fit. They looked pale and hungry.



"I tried to establish order. I got the sergeants together, and I asked, 'Why are your men dirty? Why don't they all work? Why aren't you reporting them and punishing them?' I used the method we were taught, and found out it didn't work. It turned out that the soldiers listened, or pretended to listen, only when officers were around. But when the officers weren't around, at night, it was sheer lawlessness. People were beaten up, hazed, humiliated. And they were afraid to complain about it, because I'd go home at night and they'd be left with the people they had complained about, and they'd be beaten up again."

He discovered that two kinds of gang brutality, called *dedovshchina* and *zemlyachestvo*, reigned in the barracks. The word *dedovshchina* is derived from *ded*, Russian for "grandfather," which is the Army nickname for a soldier approaching the end of his two-year hitch. Under *dedovshchina*, the new recruits lived under the thumb of the older ones: they washed the floors, cleaned the latrines, and did whatever other menial tasks their seniors wanted them to do. A soldier who resisted was beaten. The system developed, in part, because the Soviet Army had few career enlisted men. In other armies, sergeants take the responsibility for keeping order and discipline in the ranks. In the Soviet Army, a sergeant was just another enlisted man counting the days until his two years were up. Soviet officers, though they formally decried the system, tended to tolerate it in practice, as the only convenient means they had of keeping some semblance of order in the barracks.

More recently, as ethnic conflict broke into the open throughout the country, *zemlyachestvo* began to rival *dedovshchina*. This term comes from the Russian word for "land," and refers to the domination of one or another ethnic group within an Army unit. Under *zemlyachestvo*, the troops divided into racial groups. One group consisted of Slavs—Russians, Byelorussians, and Ukrainians. Troops from the Turkic groups of Central Asia—Uzbeks, Tadzhiks, Kazakhs, and so on—formed a second group. Soldiers from the Transcaucasus formed a third. If the Slavs were outnumbered, they might admit Balts to their group, on the ground that they were "white." The toughest, most numerous group ruled. According to a special commission Gorbachev appointed to investigate the problem, the annual number of allegedly accidental deaths in the Soviet armed forces had reached an average of between sixty-six hundred and eight thousand by 1990. The commission concluded, on the basis of letters and testimony it received, that about three-fourths of those deaths were connected not to accidents but to illegal practices in the barracks.

Rosnin found that *dedovshchina* made it all but impossible to impose discipline in the prescribed way. "All that a platoon commander could do to punish someone was to order him to wash floors for three days," he said. "But that soldier just turned around and forced a younger soldier to do it, while he lay on his bunk and rested." Ethnic animosity also contributed to discipline problems. Rosnin told me, "One day, I was going toward the mess hall, and I saw a Chechen soldier sitting on the grass, his pants half off, his belt un-

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done." (The Chechen are a small nationality from the Caucasus.) "He had on sunglasses, and he was smoking. He didn't stand up and salute. So I stopped, and calmly, trying to teach him, said, 'Comrade Soldier, you didn't salute. Salute, and buckle your belt.' He very calmly put his sunglasses in his pocket and picked up a brick. I didn't know what he was going to do. And then he suddenly hit me with it, right near the eye. That was a watershed moment. After that, I started to beat the soldiers. And I beat them very cruelly. I beat all of them—from Russians to Chechens."

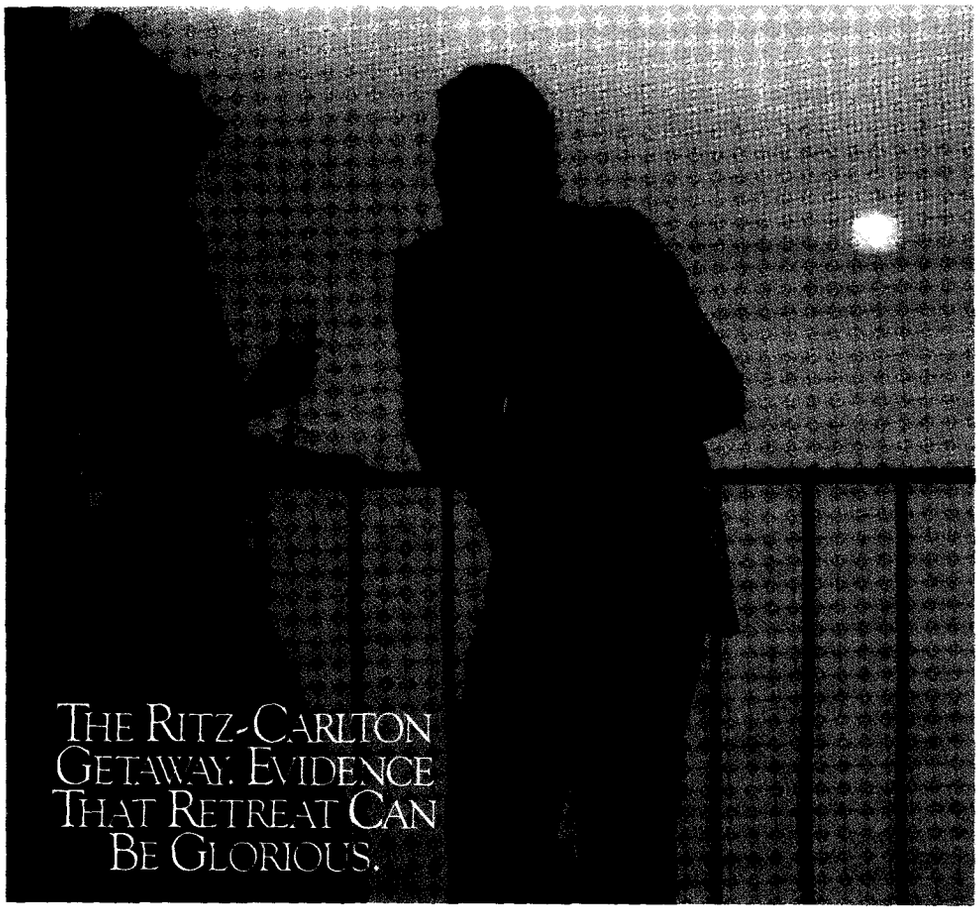
I asked why he had not brought charges against the soldier who struck him, and he said, "In the Soviet Army, there is no such right. Maybe there is on paper, but you have to know the system of the armed forces. Each regiment has a ledger of serious disciplinary offenses. An indication of violations gets the regiment a bad evaluation. The more violations, the worse the evaluation. So the political officers and the commanders are not inclined to encourage formal complaints."

Keeping discipline with his fists did nothing to harm Rosnin's career. In 1983, he was selected to work as adjutant to Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov, the chief of the general staff, in Moscow. Then he became a company commander in Czechoslovakia. "There were the same problems in Czechoslovakia that I had found in Germany," he told me. "When I served in Germany, I used to think that it was just our regiment that was bad and the rest were all right. But it turned out that it was a common disease, often more serious."

After Czechoslovakia, Rosnin went back to Moscow, and worked first in charge of a company of troops providing security to the High Command and later in a job involving the security and circulation of classified documents within the Ministry of Defense. By then, though, his belief in the Soviet military had all but gone. "I saw that the Army was rotten, rotting from within—that it wasn't combat-ready and didn't justify the means spent on it," he told me. "It wasn't professional. It relied on coercion. The soldiers were wild and on the edge of criminality, and the officers were diminished by it."

Just after he received a medal for ten years of conscientious service, Rosnin decided to quit. "They told me that the only article under which they could discharge me was for misconduct in service. I agreed to that. Then the political workers tried to persuade me not to go. They said there would be 'unpleasantness.' I told them if they didn't let me out I would burn my uniform on Red Square and throw secret documents out the window so they'd release me as a military criminal. I would have done it. So I was discharged, dishonorably." As we spoke, in June, Rosnin was trying to establish himself as an entrepreneur in the construction-materials business. In the meantime, he had gone to work as an aide for the Russian State Committee on Defense Issues.

DMITRI ROSNIN heard the news of Gorbachev's removal on the radio Monday morning, while he was ironing the suit he planned to wear to work. "I was infuriated," he told me when I met him again, in late August. "Then I turned on the television, and I saw the announcer, with his down-



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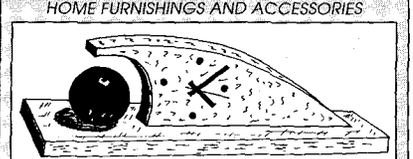

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cast face. It was terrible. Clearly, he was carrying out an unpleasant order. So I hurried to the White House." Rosnin made his way through a small crowd that had formed outside the building. At his desk, in the anteroom of Tsalko's office, he started taking telephone calls, many of them anonymous. One of the first was from a man who shouted, "If you're an honest man, make sure you warn Yeltsin not to go to the Kremlin! It's urgent! He might be arrested!" and hung up. Other calls came in from people reporting tank and troop movements; Rosnin logged them all on his computer. From the beginning, he recalled, no one in the White House felt isolated.

At around 10 A.M., word came that someone was organizing a protest meeting just outside the Kremlin, in Manezh Square—a broad plaza named for an old czarist stable building that encloses it on one end. Rosnin volunteered to go and reconnoitre. "There were maybe two hundred people there, out of eleven million people in the Moscow area," he said. "They were cursing the junta and calling for opposition. The crowd grew to about three thousand. Police cars started to show up, and fire trucks. Then we heard sirens, and saw armored vehicles, a column of them, coming from the direction of Detsky Mir"—a children's-department store that shares Dzerzhinsky Square with the Lubyanka, the headquarters of the K.G.B., about half a mile from Manezh Square. "A man with a megaphone urged people to run to meet them, and we did. They stopped, because they didn't want to run people over. People started jumping in front of them and climbing on top of them, telling the soldiers that they should be ashamed of themselves, that this was a junta. The officers kept saying that they were there to maintain order, that people shouldn't get excited."

As Rosnin was returning to the White House, shortly after noon, he saw evidence that the regular Army troops deployed on the streets had no orders to shoot at anyone and were less than eager to do so anyway. "When people said to the soldiers, 'Don't shoot at us,' they would reply that they had been told to take a position and stay there. They were honestly telling what their orders were. We understood that they wouldn't do anything except

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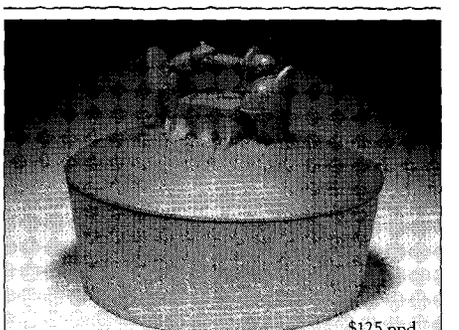

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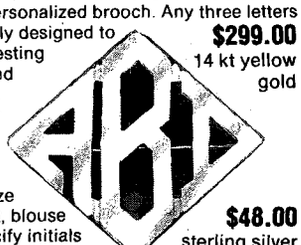

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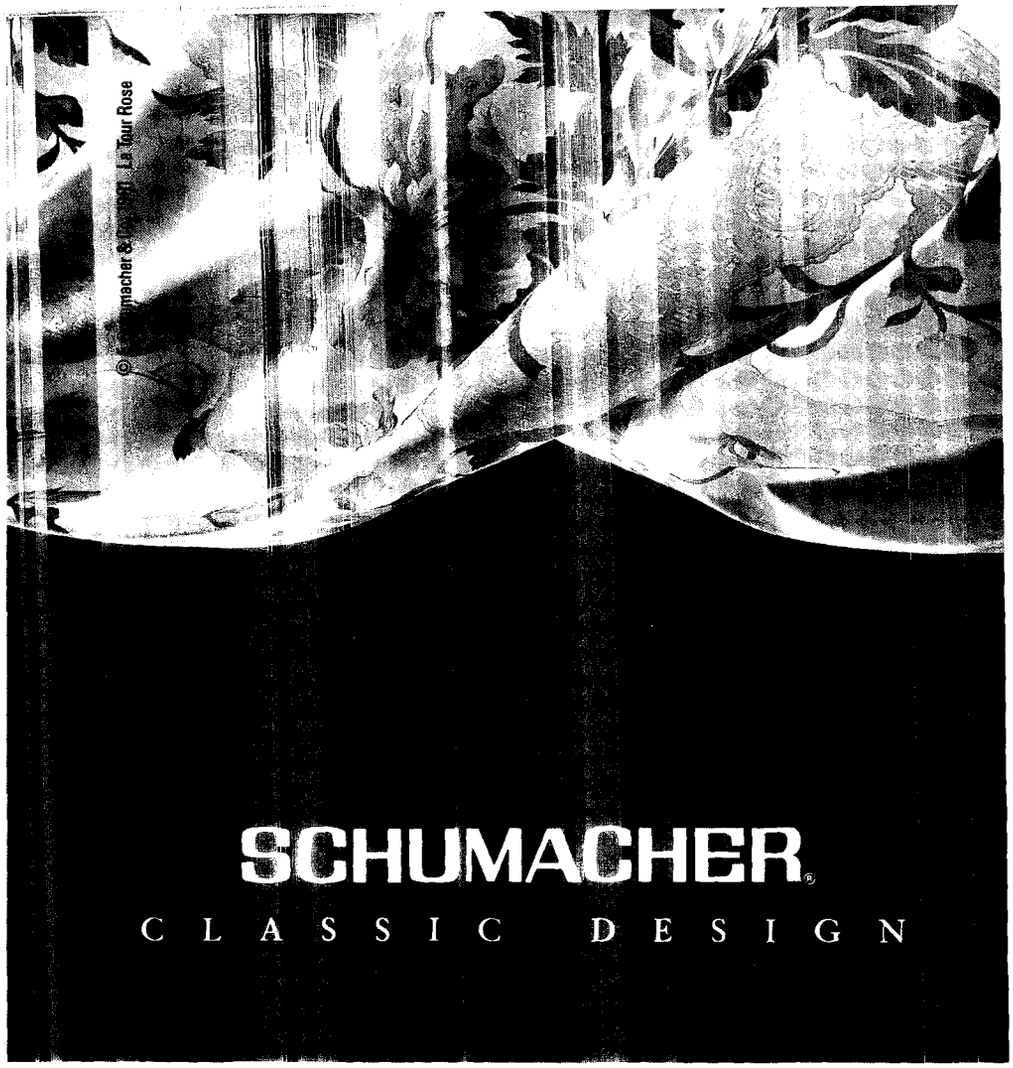
block traffic and provide a show of strength. I could tell they didn't even have shells in their tanks. They were letting kids and students climb all over the tanks, and I know that a soldier just won't let a kid play near a loaded magazine. So we knew that any offensive actions would be by special units of the K.G.B. or the Ministry of Internal Affairs."

By afternoon, Rosnin recalled, the crowd around the White House had grown to perhaps fifteen thousand. The people began to construct barricades. As it happened, one of Moscow's interminable construction projects was under way just across Kalinin Prospekt from the White House, and it provided a rich source of concrete slabs, scrap iron, and old pipe. The crowd heaped the debris at the intersections near the White House. Some of them picked up automobiles belonging to employees of the nearby American Embassy and used them to block Bolshoi Devyatinsky Lane, a side street that approached the White House. Rosnin told me that the Russian defenders inside the White House mistook this for evidence that the United States was physically helping their side. The various barricades would not stop tanks, but they served as a graphic demonstration to the conspirators and the world that there was resistance, and that bloodshed would be required to subdue it. Even so, as Rosnin pointed out, the active resistance never enlisted more than a small fraction of Moscow's population. Most Muscovites reacted to the coup with a characteristic mixture of cynicism, apathy, and despair.

A couple of accounts have emerged of the meeting of the Council of Ministers, Gorbachev's Cabinet, on Monday afternoon. Presiding was Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov, one of the conspirators. The accounts differ in some details, but they agree on one thing: not one of the ministers who spoke said anything forceful in support of Gorbachev or constitutional government, and not one resigned his position.

A journalist I know who works for TASS told me rather sadly that he and his colleagues had misjudged the situation on the first day of the coup. "At TASS, there was a feeling that the putsch would succeed and that it would take a long time to get reform back on track," he said. "We were saddened by it, but we started to do our work,



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turning out reports on world reaction to the putsch for the new leaders, so that they would have objective information. Only on Tuesday, as it became clear that the Russian parliament was meeting and opposing the putsch, did I begin to think that it might fail."

Another journalist told me that when she turned on her television on Monday morning and saw musicians playing solemn classical compositions she jumped to the conclusion that some member of the leadership, probably Gorbachev, had died. In the days of the doddering old men, the substitution of classical music for regular programming was always the first sign that a leader had died. Then the announcer appeared and read the news. "My heart fell," she said. "I didn't know what to do, so at eleven o'clock I went to work." She is an editor for a new life-styles magazine that had temporarily stopped publication for lack of suitable paper to print it on. Three of her colleagues were already at the office, equally at a loss. Finally, one of them suggested heading for a nearby bar. My friend is not a drinker, especially before lunch, but on this day she made an exception, and ordered cognac.

THE defenders of the Russian White House had not anticipated the coup, but neither did it completely surprise them. Rumors had been rumbling in Moscow for months—a threatening counterpoint to the open political struggles between reformers and conservatives. In fact, Gorbachev had addressed the rumors publicly in a speech last November to a group of restive Army officers. But after troops failed to remove the Lithuanian government in a sloppy, aborted coup in Vilnius in January, and after Yeltsin's impressive triumph in the June elections, many Muscovites had tended to dismiss the possibility of a wider coup. Andrei Piontkowsky, a civilian expert on military affairs, who occasionally advises Yeltsin's government, told me in June that the *verkhushka* might be able to organize a clandestine operation in Moscow and seize power temporarily. "But on the next day they would confront opposition from all the republics, and general strikes," he predicted. "They would have to send the Army to shoot at people, but they know that the Army wouldn't do it." Those assumptions underlay such planning as Kobets and his staff had done.

Essentially, they had three ideas: to organize enough physical resistance around the White House to confront the conspirators with the knowledge that they would have to spill blood; to try to mobilize popular resistance elsewhere in the country; and to try to suborn their colleagues and former colleagues in the armed forces, persuading them either to come over to the Russian side or, at least, to stay neutral. They knew that the Soviet armed forces, for all their millions of conscripts, had only a few élite commando units capable of seizing the White House with a minimum of civilian casualties. The K.G.B. had its Alpha Group, with about two hundred men, and also had several paratroop units. The Ministry of Internal Affairs had police units, akin to American SWAT teams, who wore black berets and were called OMON troops, after the Russian acronym for "special-assignment militia detachments." But except in the Baltic republics the OMON troops were loyal to the republic governments. (In Moscow, they helped defend the White House.) Kobets and his staff calculated that the K.G.B. did not have enough forces in Moscow to try to seize the building without Army support—most likely from helicopter-borne paratroops, who had trained for urban combat. That support was what they set out to deny the conspirators.

For the most part, they knew which officers to call. One of Kobets' deputies, a retired colonel named Vitaly Shlykov, had been running an informal propaganda program for generals he considered educable. Shlykov, who had spent years studying the American economy for the general staff, believed that many Soviet officers were honest men who had been misinformed about America's capabilities and intentions. He thought that if they knew the facts they would be more amenable to the Russian reformers' proposals for a reduced, professional Army. He tried to put such officers in touch with new sources of information, particularly from abroad. Earlier in the summer, the Conference on Security and Coöperation in Europe had invited him to assemble a small group of high-ranking officers to come to Germany for a conference on military issues. He and Aleksandr Tsalko had drawn up a list, and the

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first name they'd put on it was Colonel General Pavel Grachev, the head of the Army's paratroops.

Grachev, like Tsalko, had distinguished himself in Afghanistan as a commander who did not waste his troops. "These people, the combat veterans from Afghanistan, are used to making decisions on their own," Shlykov told me. "Grachev, for instance, organized his own intelligence in Afghanistan and paid the local people for it. He didn't act through the usual channels. Tsalko was with him in Afghanistan, and they know each other and their behavior under stress. We were pretty sure he wouldn't attack."

To reinforce that belief, Kobets called Grachev on Monday morning. "I knew the telephones were bugged, so I spoke a little vaguely with Grachev," Kobets said later. "I told him not, under any circumstances, to give the order to use weapons to storm the building. I told him he couldn't do it without a lot of firing. I've known Grachev for a long time, and I was sure he wouldn't give such an order."

Tsalko, meanwhile, had got on the phone to his former colleagues in the helicopter units. In a short time, he reported that no helicopters were moving. The defenders did not have to worry, for the time being, about being stormed from the air.

The next step, Kobets recounted, was an effort to suborn the troops on the streets—particularly those in the tanks outside the White House. "I negotiated with all the regimental commanders by radio. And we appointed a deputy from the R.S.F.S.R. Supreme Soviet to be with each tank." Soon, the deputies reported back that the tanks would not attack—that, in fact, they would help defend the building. At about this time, Yeltsin went outside, climbed on top of a tank, and read the defiant statement he and his team had drafted earlier in the morning. For the rest of the world, this image quickly came to symbolize the resistance to the coup. It played a smaller role inside Russia, because the conspirators still controlled the state television. That, however, was about the only medium of information they did manage to control.

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than closets in an aging building on a street near Red Square which used to be called Nikolskaya Street, was renamed Twenty-fifth of October Street after the Bolsheviks took power, and has now gone back to being Nikolskaya. In one of the rooms, the station's reporters, almost all of whom seem to be kids in jeans from the Journalism Department of Moscow State University, chain-smoke, chase down leads on the telephone, conduct earnest conversations on the side, and look to be having a grand time. They share a few wobbly desks, some old typewriters, and a lone computer. To broadcast, they tiptoe down a flight of iron stairs to the other room—a cramped little studio with two microphones, a tape deck, and a window that opens on to an alley, which they hope will be quiet while they're on the air.

Sergei Korzun, a tall, gray-bearded Russian with a deep, melancholy voice, is the station's editor-in-chief. When I asked him, in late August, where we could sit and talk about the events of the coup, he invited me out into the corridor, where we found a couple of chairs. I asked him to tell me about himself.

"I'm a Muscovite," he said. "My mother was an engineer, and my father was a military journalist. He retired five or six years ago with the rank of major general. From the second grade, I went to a school that specialized in French. After graduating, I went to what is now called the Linguistic University. After that, I went to work as an announcer in the French-language service of Radio Moscow."

I asked what it had been like broadcasting in the pre-*glasnost* period.

"It was a job," he said. "I was a machine for the pronunciation of what was written. If you were in disagreement with what you were saying, the only thing you could afford to do was emphasize in the text that this was an official communication from such-and-such an agency, or say that this was what so-and-so officials were saying. I didn't think about it much. It was just a way to make a living. Things changed very gradually after Gorbachev. I began to be able to do broadcasts I wrote myself—first on historical themes, and then for youth, with some reportage. In the final eighteen months there, I did a live show for four half hours a week, using both official material and material that I and other journalists put together. We could use Agence France-Presse. But there was still control."

Korzun's ambitions changed after he got to make a trip to France, in the late nineteen-eighties—ostensibly to meet with Radio Moscow listeners—under the aegis of *L'Humanité*, the French Communist newspaper. While he was there, he made contacts and arranged to work for a couple of weeks at a French radio station. "That was a decisive experience," he told me. "I understood the necessity of free radio—free of the government, particularly, in our circumstances."

Back in Moscow, he found that *perestroika* had reached the point where the state's monopoly on broadcasting could be challenged. A group of officials in the Ministry of Communications, seeing potential profits, spun off a semi-private organization called the Radio Association. They enlisted support from the progressive magazine *Ogonyok*, from Moscow State University's Department of Journalism, and from the newly elected, non-Communist Moscow City Council. The founders hired Korzun to run the program operation of Radio M, and he decided that the station's format would be *avtorskoye*—a term that literally means "author's radio" and owes a lot to the French concept of auteur. (In Moscow, the word has yet to be completely overworked.) "It means that a personality, not a reading machine, comes through the microphone," Korzun explained to me. Radio M went on the air on August 22, 1990, broadcasting two hours each evening. As its first anniversary approached, it had expanded to three hours of programming each morning and four hours each evening.

On August 19th, Korzun had the morning show to do. He took the metro to work and arrived at six-twenty—forty minutes before airtime. "The door lady said she had heard something was happening, and she asked me about it. I said I didn't know. I hadn't heard anything from the other passengers on the metro, and I hadn't seen anything unusual on the streets. When I got upstairs, I turned on the radio. A single, official program was going out over all frequencies. Radio Rossiya, the Russian government station, had been taken off the air. It didn't get back on until the putsch was practically over. It's connected in all its technical aspects to All-Union Radio. We have an independent transmitter six or seven miles from here. Just then, they read the official announcement about Gorbachev and the emergency situation. The first thing that occurred to me was that my whole morning-program plan was shot." He laughed.

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In your extended absence, you permit me
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some return on investment. I must report
failure in my assignment, principally
regarding the tomato plants.
I think I should not be encouraged to grow
tomatoes. Or, if I am, you should withhold
the heavy rains, the cold nights that come
so often here, while other regions get
twelve weeks of summer. All this
belongs to you: on the other hand,
I planted the seeds, I watched the first shoots
like wings tearing the soil, and it was my heart
broken by the blight, the black spot so quickly
multiplying in the rows. I doubt
you have a heart, in our understanding of
that term. You who do not discriminate
between the dead and the living, who are, in consequence,
immune to foreshadowing, you may not know
how much terror we bear, the spotted leaf,
the red leaves of the maple falling
even in August, in early darkness: I am responsible
for these vines.

—Louise Glück

• •

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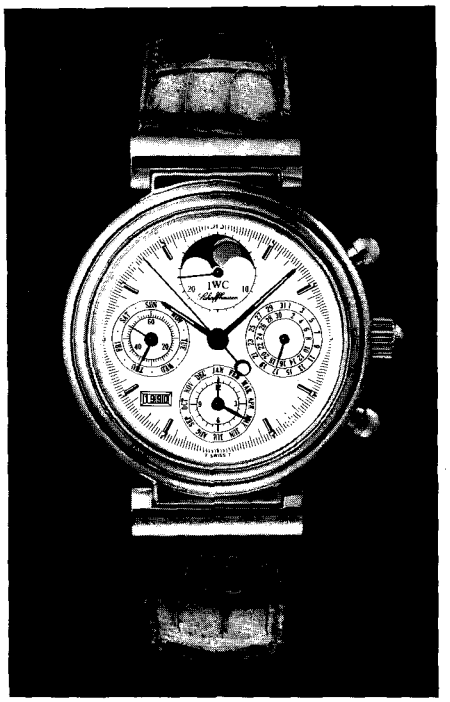
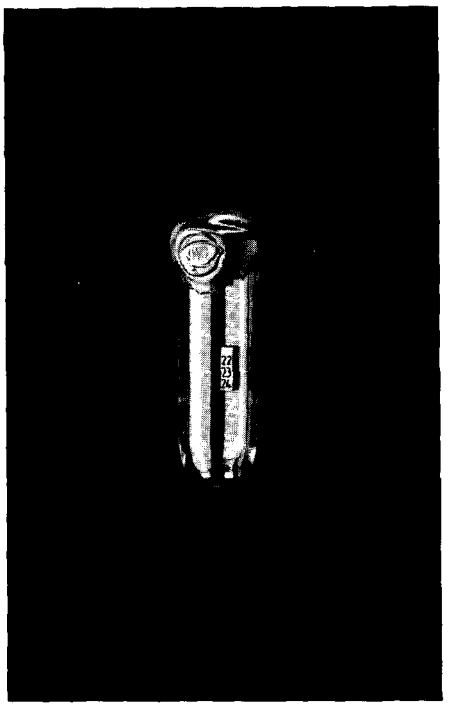
"I went into our newsroom and found that the text of the statement had already come in from TASS. First, I called the transmitter, to find out whether it had been turned off, because it was obvious that this was a putsch and they'd try to shut us off the air. Nothing had happened out there. Everything was normal. I had to find people who could comment on the situation. I woke up a writer and essayist who has worked with us a lot, and told him the news. He agreed to come in right away. Then I started calling everyone on the staff, and I picked out some music for the show: Soviet social rock, by Time Machine, DDT, and groups like that—not what we usually play. We have news every twenty minutes, but that morning we had almost nothing except official statements. We did have a bit of unofficial news from one of our reporters. He told us he had seen an armored column heading into Moscow. We used that with every news broadcast, but since there was no other unofficial information I read the official statement with minimal commentary, making it clear that it was an official announcement. I was just trying to stay on the air until people arrived with more information. At about seven-forty, six men from the K.G.B. came into the studio. They were wearing civilian clothes—suits and ties. To be honest, I thought at first they were guests who had come in—deputies, or something. The leader of the group told me I would have to cut off the broadcast. But when he wouldn't show me any identification or written orders I refused. I told him that if he had authority he could do it himself, but I wouldn't. I was playing some music at the time, and I thought about turning on the microphone. But it was pointed away from him, and he was speaking very softly. He began to insist, and to try to persuade me. It was all very polite. He said they themselves didn't know what was happening—they'd just received an order to close us. He even said he was a regular listener! He just had an order and had to carry it out. Then, at about a minute before our eight-o'clock news, someone came down from the newsroom and said we'd gone off the air. There's a communication line between the studio and the transmitter, with a switch on the second floor." The switch belonged to the Ministry of Communications, and Korzun assumes that some-





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one from the Ministry led the K.G.B. agents to it and showed them how to turn it off.

The K.G.B. agents remained polite, even diffident. "They said they'd close the studio and seal it, but they allowed us to take out anything we thought was valuable, so it wouldn't be stolen. I left the studio and locked the door. They put three men at the door of the studio, but within an hour the men disappeared, without doing anything. They didn't seal the studio. I had the key. It just didn't seem serious."

Korzun gathered his staff of reporters, who by that time had all come in. "It was clear to everyone that we had to keep working on the news, and look for a way to get back on the air, or transmit our information somehow."

I asked him whether they had been afraid.

"I won't speak for others, but, to be honest, the people who'd worked a long time for the state radio—they'd had fear planted in them. The struggle with that fear, inside a person—that was maybe the most important struggle of this whole time. But the young people, the students—they hadn't been frightened yet, and thank God for that. Nobody talked about how he couldn't say this or that, or said we had to be careful."

Nevertheless, it did not occur to the broadcasters to try to take matters into their own hands and force their way back on the air. Instead, Korzun began writing letters of complaint and protest, pointing out that the station had contractual obligations to its business partners and advertisers. By evening, the Moscow City Council had adopted Radio M's cause, and began pressing to get the station back on the air. It turned out, Korzun said, that the Ministry of Communications was split into two factions—one in favor of letting the station back on the air, and the other opposed. A deputy minister issued an order to flip the switch and restore the connection between the studio and its transmitter.

Early Tuesday afternoon, the station got back on the air, and it stayed there, with three interruptions, until the coup was over. It soon set up a direct telephone link to the Russian White House, and it broadcast tapes of Yeltsin's statement and interviews with the leaders of the resistance. The K.G.B. could have prevented all that simply by sealing off the studio. A week after the event, its failure to do so remained one of the many puzzling examples of the conspirators' fecklessness.

Print journalists found the coup leadership equally timorous. The conspirators ordered the closing of all newspapers that had been too fervent advocates of *glasnost* and reform. But even safe newspapers were no longer safe. At *Izvestiya*, the staff resisted the orders of its pro-coup editor-in-chief, who wanted to print only the official statements by the State Committee on the Emergency Situation. The printers backed up the reporters. Together, they forced him to publish—although he put it on the second page—an article about Yeltsin's defiant stand, including a call for a general strike which he had made in his speech.

Journalists from some of the banned newspapers got to work writing and photocopying broadsides that were filled with whatever anti-coup information they could assemble. One of the broadsides, a joint product of the Radio M staff and the staff of a weekly called *Sobesednik*, reported, correctly, that Gorbachev was not ill. "The President of the country was removed from his post by force, against his will, and is being held by force. This is a serious state crime," it declared. The journalists who had produced it quickly fanned out into the Moscow subway system. "We wanted to paste it to the walls there, because we figured that that was where the most people would see it," one of the *Sobesednik* writers, Olga Belan, told me. "I was helping to paste up one of the first ones when I saw a policeman coming. I thought we might be arrested. But the policeman very deliberately turned his back on us."

THE conspirators' failure to isolate the resistance, to cut off all its communications, also struck the poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko. Word of the coup first reached him—at his dacha in Peredyelkino, the writers' suburb a few miles west of Moscow—around 9 A.M. on the nineteenth, in a telephone call from his sister. Then he heard about it from a friend named Yuri Nekhoroshev, the president of a fan club called the Yevtushenkologists, who had driven out to Peredyelkino to be with him during the crisis. "I was frightened for the country, for the destiny of my babies, for my wife, for

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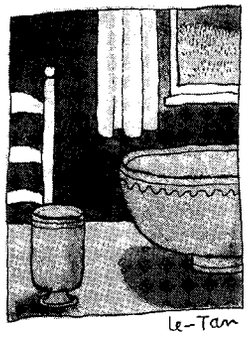
all our people, and for myself. I could be arrested or killed. Censorship could be reëstablished," Yevtushenko told me a few days later. He took his dogs, a St. Bernard named Bim and a Russian wolfhound named Moroz, and went for a run in the woods near the dacha. A neighbor jogged past, going in the other direction. "He said, 'I'll see you at the Russian parliament,'" Yevtushenko told me. "It was so beautiful! He didn't ask me. He just said it, as if it were self-evident!"

For a while, Yevtushenko and his friend Nekhoroshev sat in the living room of the dacha and listened to the radio, hoping for more news. With Radio M temporarily off the air, Soviet stations were transmitting only the official statements of the conspirators. Yevtushenko found, though, that no one was jamming Radio Liberty, the United States' Russian-language station, broadcasting from Munich. From Radio Liberty he learned that Yeltsin was at large, in the Russian parliament. He remembers thinking, Why am I sitting here listening to history instead of making history?



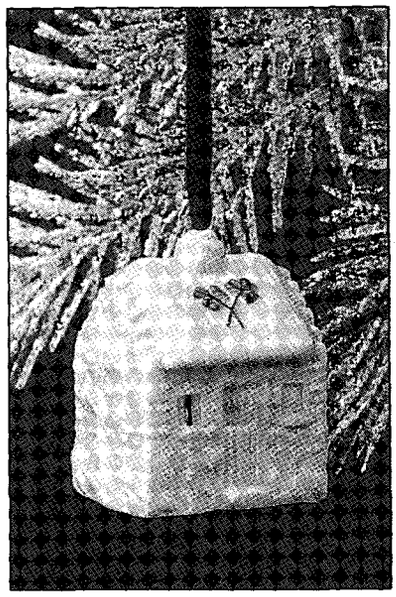
Yevtushenko and Nekhoroshev drove to Moscow in Nekhoroshev's car, a battered Zhiguli. They travelled down the Minsk Highway, and just as they reached the Kalininsky Bridge, which leads to the White House, they overtook a single tank. It looked, Yevtushenko thought, as if the driver had got lost. The tank clattered up onto the bridge and approached one of the barricades, which by that time had been reinforced by a trolleybus from the city transit system. "There were not very many people on the bridge at this point, probably a hundred," Yevtushenko recalled. "But they surrounded the tank, and some absolutely fearless guy jumped on it. People jumped on it from the roof of the trolleybus and started banging on it." The tank started to pivot, and a soldier emerged from the hatch and fired two shots into the air, to frighten the crowd off. Then the tank retreated across the bridge.

To Yevtushenko, the White House nevertheless seemed defenseless, dwarfed by Stalin's old Hotel Ukraina, across the river, and, next door, by the tower of the Communist bloc's defunct Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. "A few people were running around making barricades," he said. "Some of it was childish, using things like fishing lines. But they were also working with cranes, putting concrete blocks on the barricades. At the main entrance, there were just a few policemen."

Yevtushenko talked his way into the building. What he saw inside, in a labyrinth of institutional hallways with dull-green walls and scuffed parquet floors, discouraged him further. "I was walking in the corridors, and I saw not more than sixty armed men. They were very lonely and empty, these corridors. Many bureaucrats were not at work. Except for one category—the young women secretaries. Almost all of them had appeared. They had more courage than the men." From an office window he saw snipers stationed on top of a nearby building.

When he arrived at an office occupied by some of Yeltsin's assistants, he began to feel better. The aides were working the phones to Russia's provincial cities, assuring allies and fence sitters that there was resistance. "The *verkhushka* had cut the special government telephone lines, but they found other lines to use, and were placing calls to so many cities, explaining the work to be done very clearly, very energetically, with no unnecessary words, no rhetoric, just action," Yevtushenko recalled. "And they were very strong and sharp in their definition of the putschists. They didn't say everything was O.K., but they encouraged people with their clarity and decisiveness."

In a corridor, Yevtushenko encountered Yeltsin. "You know, I voted for Yeltsin, and I encouraged others to vote for him, but I was never really a crazy admirer," he told me. "He seemed to be a man too direct, with not enough nuances about him. But when I saw him at this moment of history he was just beautiful, and I fell in love with him. We have a very ancient Russian painting of Peter the Great striding toward a wharf. This was how Yeltsin looked to me. He was very sculptural—strong, massive. He saw me, and I said to him, very stupidly, but from the heart, 'Thank you, Boris Nikolayevich, on behalf of



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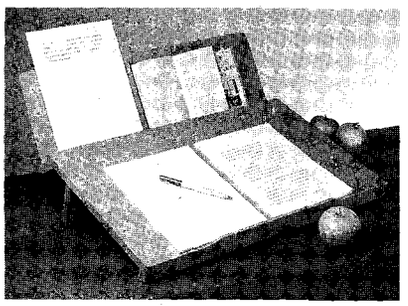

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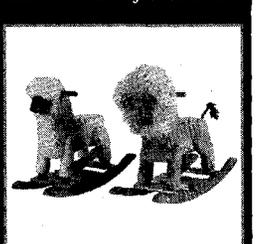

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the Russian people.' Why I said it I don't know, because the Russian people didn't ask to me express such a thing. It was just spontaneous. He embraced me and said, 'Thank you for being with us. Let's go fight together.' And he winked at me. He winked! At that moment, it was as if a statue had winked. It was a wonderful spark of hope."

Yevtushenko followed Yeltsin out onto a balcony. Surrounded by bodyguards who were holding bulletproof shields around him, Yeltsin delivered a speech to the people below. Yevtushenko remembered being struck again by how sparse the crowd looked. "It was a couple of thousand, and they were in a big space, surrounded by tanks, the bridge, the Ukraina Hotel. They looked like two thousand seeds in an enormous desert. Despite this, Yeltsin was so sure of himself. In a mighty voice, he condemned the conspirators. And at about that moment, very far away, a soldier on one of the tanks raised the Russian tricolor flag and began to wave it. It was like a fairy tale, you know. It was a great beginning."

When Yevtushenko went back inside, he found that Yeltsin, despite the sparse crowd in front of the building, was connected to the Russian people by Radio Liberty. "They were working on the eleventh floor. They had a crew there!" (What Radio Liberty actually had was some Soviet stringers who managed to open a phone line to Munich and keep it open throughout the crisis.) "They were directly giving all our messages to Munich, and Munich was broadcasting to all of the Soviet Union. They were our connection with our own country."

Yevtushenko and another writer, Yuri Chernichenko, gave Radio Liberty an interview. Yevtushenko compared the coup with the day in 1968 when the Soviet government sent its tanks into Prague. This time, he predicted, the results would be different, because the soldiers were different. "I said that the great difference between 1968 and today is that they are not so obedient, not the way they were. Freedom—*glasnost*—has educated them, transformed them, and they will not again be marionettes in the hands of the dictatorship."

Then the poet went outside and walked among the people building the barricades. He thought he saw in them a new and different generation of Russians. "There was an incredibly high percentage of young people," he recalled. "In the past, when there had been rallies for democracy the people who came were more middle-aged, people of my generation. Sometimes the young people didn't support our generation, because they thought, Ah, we have nothing to do with Stalin, we were born after Stalin was dead, and these old people, it is their business. But now they faced the possibility of a different dictatorship, and they were fighting for their own futures. Because now they had a chance. The world could be open to them. They could enter into a borderless Europe. They could in the future, each one of them, see any country they want. Each one of them could read any kind of books that he wanted, dance all the dances that he wanted, hear all the songs that he wanted. They all wanted to be part of the civilized world. They didn't want to spend their lives behind the Iron Curtain, the way our generation did."

OTHER accounts I heard suggested that many of the young people had come to the White House to defend not their right to sing and dance but their new and very revokable right to get rich. Economic reform, over the last two or three years, has given rise to a new class of businessmen in Moscow. Some of them began, a decade or so ago, by peddling black-market running shoes out of the trunks of their taxicabs. Others got started in the late nineteen-eighties, when a person with the right connections could convert a thousand rubles into hard currency at the inflated official rate; use it, perhaps, to buy a personal computer in the West; and then sell the computer in Moscow for sixty thousand rubles or more. More recently, the new class has moved into commodities exchanges, where its members act as brokers for wood, cloth, and other materials turned out by Soviet enterprises that have been granted the right to sell a portion of their production in the free market. From commodities exchanges they have branched into banking. Moscow abounds with tales of the fortunes that some of these businessmen have amassed.

I visited one of them, Konstantin Borovoi, at the headquarters of the Russian commodities exchange, which

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stands midway between the building that used to house the Central Committee of the Communist Party and Dzerzhinsky Square, where the statue of Feliks Dzerzhinsky, the founder of the Soviet secret police, used to stand. (It was pulled down by the crowd after the coup failed.) Borovoi shares his office with a couple of Japanese telephones, a fax machine, a secretary, and a bodyguard, who told me he had retired, a few months before the coup, from the K.G.B. unit that provides security for Gorbachev.

"For all of us, it was a matter of life and death, you understand," Borovoi said when I asked him about the business community's role in the resistance. Borovoi normally has little difficulty restraining his enthusiasm for reform politicians like Yeltsin and Gavriil Popov, the mayor of Moscow. He believes, essentially, that you can take the politician out of the Communist Party but you can't take the Communist Party out of the politician. "If you call up the people at the Moscow City Council and tell them that your building doesn't have hot water, their response is to create a Ministry of Hot Water to investigate the problem," he said.

But on August 19th he had no doubt that the coup leaders, if they succeeded, would be worse, and the other brokers at the exchange agreed with him. So the brokers passed a hat and stuffed it with rubles. "It was about two hundred thousand rubles—no, two hundred million," Borovoi said, grandly and unverifiably. "No one really counted it. One bank simply delivered ten million rubles in cash. The workers, you see, didn't support the resistance. No one organized strikes." The businessmen's money, he said, bought the buses and trolleys that became part of the barricades around the White House. It bought truckloads of sand and concrete to reinforce them. It bought weapons, cigarettes, food, medical supplies, and private security guards to help in the building's defense.

Details of the story were impossible to confirm. Several participants told me, though, that private security guards from a company called Alisa were prominent among the White House's early defenders. I did see some piles of sand at the barricades. And Dmitri Rosnin, the disaffected ex-officer on the staff of the defense

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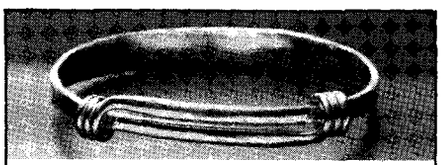

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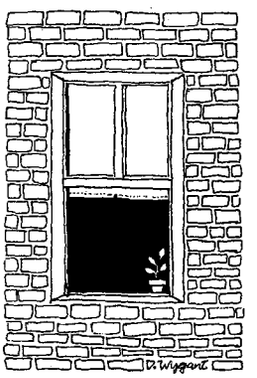
committee, recalled the participation of one of the first and most well known of the Soviet-American joint businesses. "Pizza Hut delivered its pizza to us," he recalled. "Absolutely free. It was great. I was very appreciative."

The conspirators' peculiar combination of timidity and dishonesty, meanwhile, rapidly disillusioned supporters. One of the disillusioned was Colonel Viktor Alksnis, popularly known as "the black colonel" in the Supreme Soviet, where he led a faction, called Soyuz, or Union, that was dedicated to preventing the secession of any republic. Alksnis, the child of a Latvian father and a Russian mother, represented a largely Russian constituency in Riga. The possibility of Latvian independence frightened many members of the republic's large Russian minority, and Alksnis belligerently represented their fears.



Alksnis can be quite candid. When I first met him, in June, he spoke fairly openly about his role, and the roles of others, in the attempted coup in Vilnius in January—an event that was in many ways a precursor of what happened in Moscow in August. "The plans began in the middle of last year," he said. "I was a member of the presidium of the Latvian Committee for National Salvation. I participated in all its meetings. And I know very well who telephoned us over government lines, whom we called over government lines, the coded messages that we sent and to whom."

I asked him who had initiated the Vilnius plan.

"It came about at the initiative of various circles. I don't want to talk about it in detail."

Was it the Party?

"Not just them. It was the Army, the K.G.B., the Ministry of Internal Affairs. It was all supposed to be based on the introduction of Presidential rule in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. On the basis of that decree, Vytautas Landsbergis and all the leaders of those republics were supposed to be removed. But Gorbachev at the last minute didn't sign the decree."

"Then had Gorbachev known about the plans in advance?" I asked.

"It was all discussed at a meeting of the Presidential Council," Alksnis said scornfully.

I asked him when that meeting had taken place. He told me he had already said enough, so I asked him why the operation had been suspended. The Vilnius coup, I knew, had foundered, like the Moscow coup, when a determined group of civilians occupied their legislative building and defied the authorities to kill them.

"Because Gorbachev gave the order to retreat," Alksnis replied. "Because he's not a principled politician. He didn't have the political will."

But Gorbachev had given the orders to bring the operation to that point?

"Yes. But he gave unofficial orders, oral orders. On that basis, the Committees of National Salvation acted."

I was curious about the connection between Gorbachev's alleged failure of nerve in January and the decision by many of the same plotters to remove him in August. But when we met again, in late August, Alksnis told me that he had known nothing of the plans for the coup against the central government. And, in the light of the amount of talking he had done about the aborted coup in the Baltic, it seemed reasonable to believe his contention that this time the conspirators had left him out of the loop.

I asked him what his reaction had been when he first heard the news on August 19th.

"A positive reaction," he said. "Because I had for a long time supported the idea that we needed emergency measures for the salvation of the country."

Had he believed that Gorbachev was ill?

"No, of course not. I understood he'd been removed from power. But I expected that there would be some legal formality—that Gorbachev would announce his retirement."

His enthusiasm for the coup began to waver, however, as soon as he left his apartment in Riga and went to the headquarters of the Baltic Military District. "We got an order by telegram from Moscow to get the troops ready for battle," he said. "That seemed legal. Marshal Yazov"—Dmitri Yazov, the Minister of Defense—"had the right to give such orders. I was told that the order said to place a guard around the important points in the city.

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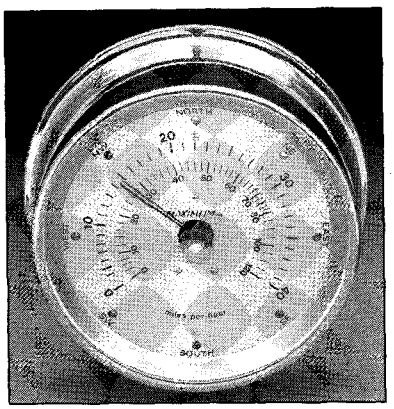

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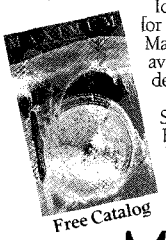

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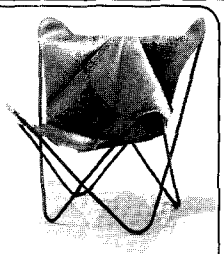

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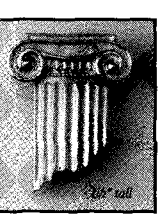

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But after that there was nothing but silence from Moscow. Just before I left Riga, I went to the headquarters of OMON, the special-police unit. And they were also ready, but had no commands to act. I can't guess why. Obviously, if you make a decision you've got to move on it. Every hour is important. Otherwise, you lose the initiative."

I asked Alksnis when he had realized that the coup would fail.

He shook his head in disgust, and said he knew that it would fail when he watched the broadcast of the Monday-afternoon press conference staged by most members of the State Committee on the Emergency Situation and saw that the hands of Vice-President Yanayev, who had assumed the title of Acting President, were trembling.

NEVERTHELESS, back in the White House that afternoon, General Kobets was by no means confident. His conversation with General Grachev, the paratroop commander, had persuaded him only that Grachev would not order the paratroops to assist in taking the building. His men had also been assured that Colonel General Yevgeny Shaposhnikov, the commander of the Air Force, would not provide aircraft for an assault from above. "But Grachev and Shaposhnikov could have been removed at any time," Kobets recalled. "The conspirators could have taken direct command of the various units."

On Monday evening, Colonel Tsalko and other officers on Kobets' staff noticed some dangerous movements by a battalion-size detachment of soldiers near the White House. According to later interviews given by the participants, a paratroop unit, led by Major General Aleksandr Lebed, and the K.G.B.'s Alpha commandos, led by Major General Viktor Karpukhin, were in fact reconnoitring. Their armored personnel carriers began edging up a paved driveway toward the White House. By that time, the crowd had grown to perhaps fifteen thousand people, and had formed a loose ring around the building.

"Tsalko was always at the right spot when a crisis occurred," Kobets' deputy Colonel Shlykov recalled a few days afterward. "The armored vehicles were moving in a way that didn't look as though they were coming to help. If

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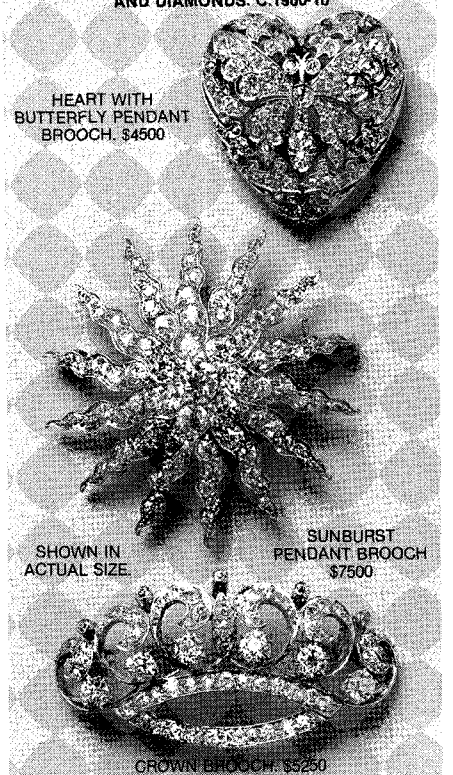

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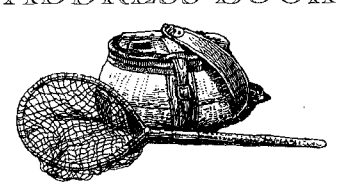

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they had occupied the perimeter of the building, it would have been only a matter of minutes before they occupied the whole building. Tsalko went out and jumped on top of an armored personnel carrier and ordered the crowd to move in front of the armored vehicles. The crowd responded. He was as pale as death at that moment. No one thought he would have such a commanding voice. The crowd pushed forward, surrounding the tanks immediately, so they couldn't move without crushing people."

With the armor stopped, Tsalko persuaded Lebed to enter the building alone and meet with Kobets. "Lebed came here, and we talked in detail about the situation," Kobets told me. "I said straight out that this operation had an anti-state character, that it was a putsch, that it was subject to criminal penalties, and that he, as an honest man, had at that moment to make an important decision. We agreed that his paratroop unit would not participate in any operation. And he gave that order." In fact, Lebed's unit began to protect the White House, as all the Army units sent to surround it that day were now doing. "The first night passed not because of our own defense but because the armed forces were protecting us," Kobets said.

On the following day, the Russian forces began suborning the rest of the troops in the city. Dmitri Rosnin joined an agitprop group that set out in a private car from the White House. "We went looking for columns of armor," he told me. "Around the Rossiya Theatre we saw a unit of about eighty armored vehicles. We started to talk with the company commander—to find out what his assignment was, and to argue that it was an illegal power he was serving. The soldiers in the unit quite happily took and read the documents we were passing out—Yeltsin's statement, and so on. I didn't see any efforts to stop them, nor did I see any loaded weapons. I told the commander that I myself was a former company commander. I also told him a lie—that some storm troops had come to the White House and had come over to our side. He said he knew about that. I said that if I were in his position I would take my men and go over to Yeltsin's side. I noticed that he had tears in his eyes. I understood what kind of stress he was under. He couldn't reply. I said, 'O.K., if you

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can't do that, then at least explain to the soldiers the situation—tell them that Yazov is a criminal, and Pugo, too. You're a Russian officer, not just a Soviet officer. Have you forgotten that?' He didn't answer. He just listened, and his eyes got red. I said, 'O.K., then just don't shoot us.' As I turned to go, I heard his reply: 'O.K.'"

EXCEPT for some coal miners in Siberia, the population ignored Yeltsin's Monday call for a general strike. Even so, by Tuesday afternoon the mood around the White House had grown more confident. There was a palpable sense that the conspirators were, in the description of Russian Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoi, *dvoechniki*—a schoolyard word meaning "dumbbells." The resistance was further encouraged by the news from Leningrad: its mayor, Anatoly Sobchak, had persuaded the local Army commander to ignore the committee and keep his troops outside the city. And Radio Liberty and the other Western stations, abetted now by Radio M, brought news of growing support from abroad. The resistance did not know that Colonel General Shaposhnikov had urged Yazov to give up, but it did have rumors and tidbits of news, coming in constantly by telephone, of disarray, drunkenness, and illness among the conspirators.

Yevgeny Yevtushenko returned to the White House on Tuesday morning for a mass rally organized by Yeltsin's staff. "It was an absolutely different day from Monday," he recalled. The tanks near the building, he saw, had turned their cannon around and, in a light rain, had hoisted the Russian tricolor. He estimated the crowd around the building to be between seventy thousand and a hundred thousand. Out on the balcony, among the other speakers gathered to address the people, Yevtushenko listened as Yelena Bonner, the widow of Andrei Sakharov, declared that the coup would fail, because the people of the Soviet Union were no longer cattle. Mstislav Rostropovich, the cellist, who had flown back to his native land without a visa as soon as he heard about the coup, could barely find words. He simply said that this was the happiest day of his life.

Yevtushenko had planned to recite some lines from a Pushkin poem called "To Chaadaev," written in the dark

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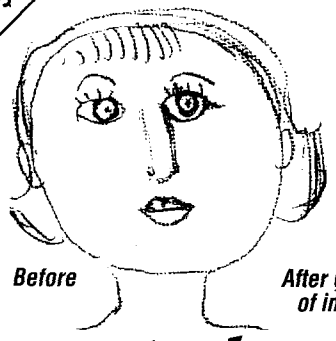

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years of nineteenth-century Russian imperialism:

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> She will rise, the star of captivating happiness;
> Russia will arise from slumber,
> And they will write our names on the ruins of autocracy.

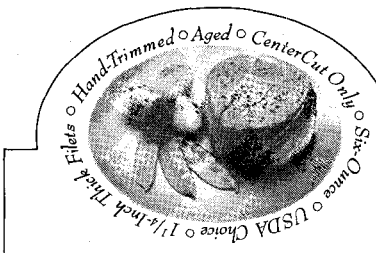
Before he could speak, however, a Russian deputy had the same idea and recited that verse to the crowd. Undaunted, Yevtushenko borrowed a pen and scrawled a new poem on the back of a copy of Yeltsin's Monday statement. It began:

> This August day shall be glorified in songs and ballads.
> Today we are a nation—
> no longer fools,
> happy to be fooled.

"We were absolutely sure of victory that day," Yevtushenko recalled. "I mean, I've never seen such an enthusiastic rally."

Inside the White House, though, Kobets and his staff had received warnings from sympathizers that the conspirators still planned to storm the building. "We were warned by several sources," Dmitri Rosnin recalled. "We got calls from K.G.B. officers and from military intelligence. My job was to try to confirm the information that came in over the phone. They had warned us that there might be disinformation, so each source had to be verified by two or more sources. A K.G.B. officer called and, after saying that he had only a minute to talk, told us that during the night there would be an attack on the Russian parliament, with helicopters and paratroops from K.G.B. units landing on the roof. We got a lot of help from Lithuania. They said they had radio intercepts confirming that there would be an effort to take the White House. I immediately sent the information to Kobets. The whole collective worked that way. We were well informed."

The leaks coming in to the White House suggested that the conspirators were trying desperately to find units both capable of seizing the building and willing to follow an order to do so. Because of the attitude of the Army—particularly its paratroops—the conspirators had to rely on the K.G.B.'s Alpha Group and on K.G.B. paratroop units that had apparently not been in Moscow when the coup began. "I know that there was a small group



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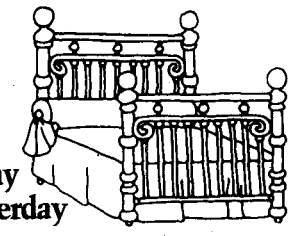

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meeting at the Ministry of Defense concerning the realization of the plan for taking the building," Kobets told me. Colonel Shlykov said that by Tuesday intelligence sources were telling the Russians that Marshal Sergei Akhromeyev, who had been Gorbachev's military adviser, had shouldered the wavering Yazov aside and was issuing orders.

As best they could, the officers in the White House prepared a defense. Kobets ordered that the lights in the building be turned off, to make it harder for snipers on adjoining rooftops to find targets. He stationed some of his armed men on the roof to fire at incoming helicopters, though he knew he did not have enough men to repel a major assault. Tsalko, Rosnin, and others stayed on the phones, calling their sources to see if helicopters were moving, and receiving reports about troop movement. Fog began to billow in from the Moscow River.

Sometime after midnight, a group of armored vehicles began moving along the Garden Ring Road, headed away from the White House. They appeared to be going to take positions along the perimeter of the area around the White House, perhaps to enforce a curfew that the commander of the Moscow Military District had decreed. The vehicles rolled through an underpass and up a slight rise, flanked by concrete walls, toward a barricade manned by a few hundred young civilians. Several of them jumped on top of the Army vehicles, and one tossed a blanket over a turret, blinding the soldiers inside. A soldier opened fire. In the ensuing melee, three civilians died. Their deaths contributed nothing to the defense of the White House, but they provided the resistance with its first—and only—martyrs. Adapting Russian Orthodox burial tradition to the revolutionary circumstances, Muscovites brought flowers, eggs, fruit, and candles to the bloodstained places on the pavement. The candles burned, tended by veterans of the skirmish, for days afterward, just as candles had burned in streets in Bucharest, Prague, Timisoara, and other cities where bloodshed had accompanied the demise of Communism during the last two remarkable years. "Eternal memory for you, boys," someone painted on one of the concrete walls.

Back in the White House, Tsalko

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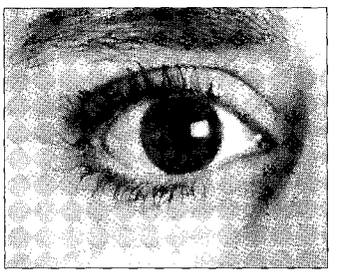

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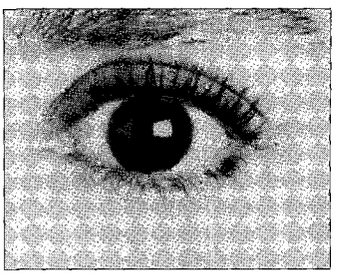

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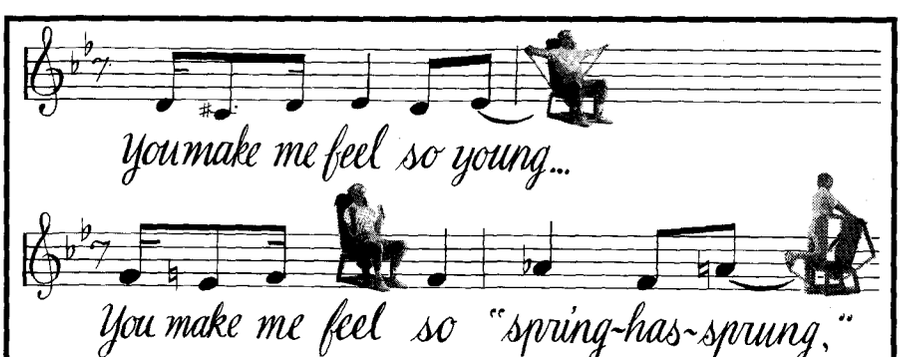

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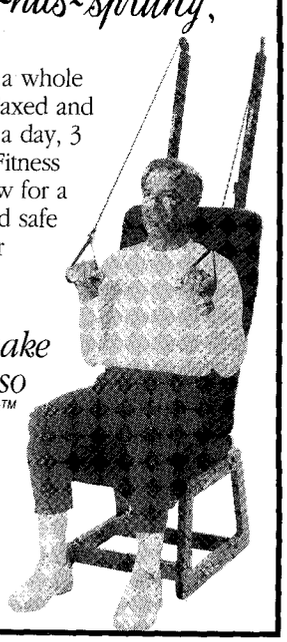

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picked up word that a K.G.B. paratroop division, brought into Moscow from Vitebsk, was advancing toward the White House via the Borodinsky Bridge, half a mile upstream from the barricaded Kalininsky Bridge. Members of Yeltsin's staff got on the phone to Vladimir Kryuchkov, the head of the K.G.B., and let him know that his troops' movements were being monitored. Kobets got word to Russian officials who were keeping watch near the Borodinsky Bridge, and they managed to move some taxis quickly onto the bridge to serve as a barricade. In the White House, Kobets waited for the sound of gunfire. "I kept looking at my watch," he told me. "Two o'clock, and no storming of the building. Two-fifteen—no. Two-thirty—no. And at that point I said to everyone, 'It's all over. We've won.'"

IN the aftermath of this final, conclusive failure, various sources offered various explanations for the conspirators' impotence. Major General Karpukhin, the leader of the Alpha Group, gave an interview shortly after the coup collapsed in which he boasted that he could have taken the White House within fifteen minutes. He did not, he said, because he had no faith in the conspirators. Other Alpha Group officers then surfaced in the press claiming that it was their refusal, and not Karpukhin's, that had sabotaged the mission. Tsalko and his colleagues told me that the refusal of Army helicopter pilots to fly paratroops toward the building had been critical. At one point on Tuesday night, the pilots had taken off but had returned to their bases, claiming that the fog prevented them from navigating. That, Tsalko told me, "was basically a pretext." All the explanations, however self-serving and however contradictory, had a common thread: the Soviet Army had refused to shed blood on behalf of the conspiracy.

The refusal should not have surprised Yanayev, Yazov, Kryuchkov, and the other conspirators. Two months before the coup, I asked a number of knowledgeable people whether they thought a military coup was likely, and, if so, whether it might succeed. All of them had agreed, for various reasons, with Andrei Piontkowsky, the civilian expert on military affairs, who had correctly forecast that a coup would collapse within days. One was Major

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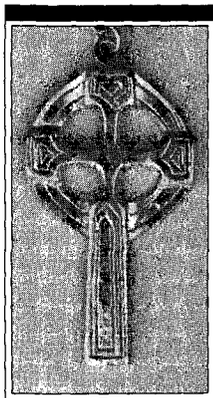

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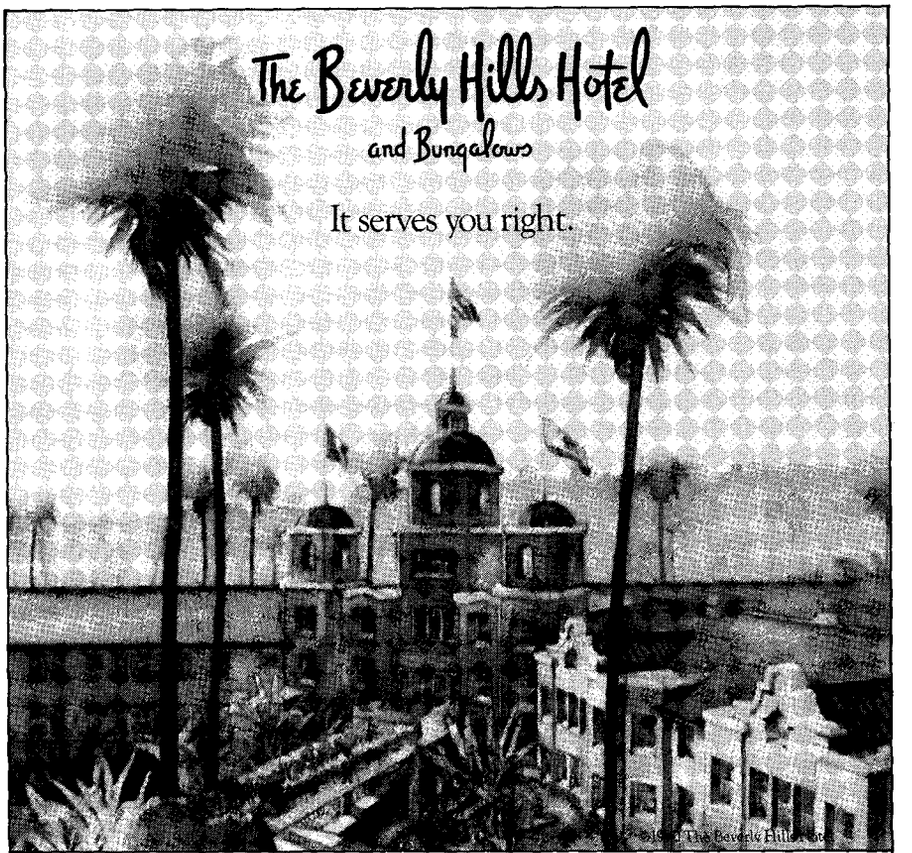
General Alexei Bazhenov, the editor of a Ministry of Defense journal called *Military Thought*. "If there were a social basis for a putsch, I can assure you it would have happened a long time ago," he told me. I asked what he meant by a "social basis," and he replied, "People outside the military who would be interested in a putsch. In Latin America, putsches happen one after another. Why? Because there are circles with an interest in them. In the Soviet Union, there are no such people. Or I don't know of any."

A new survey organization in Moscow, the Soviet Center for Public Opinion and Market Research, had some data that supported Bazhenov's view. The center had periodically asked a national sample of Soviet citizens for their opinions on the Army and the prospect of a military coup. In 1989, the percentage replying that they fully trusted the Army began to drop in the months after soldiers with sharpened shovels killed peaceful demonstrators in Tbilisi, Georgia; it declined from thirty-five per cent to fifteen before levelling off. A little less than eight per cent, according to a survey taken in the spring of this year, said they would support an immediate military takeover.

After the coup failed, many of my acquaintances in Moscow spent hours speculating about why the conspirators had attempted to seize power. It seemed quite likely that they thought Gorbachev would yield to their pressure—perhaps, as Colonel Alksnis had suggested, by publicly resigning. That would have given Vice-President Yanayev a legitimate claim to the Presidency.

No doubt the impending signing ceremony for the new union treaty, scheduled for August 20th, had something to do with the timing. The treaty was the result of a move toward the progressive end of the Soviet spectrum which Gorbachev had initiated sometime after the abortive coup in Vilnius demonstrated the improbability of holding the union together by force. To persuade at least some of the republic leaders, particularly Yeltsin, to sign a new treaty, he had made significant concessions to republic demands for autonomy, especially in the area of taxes. Had the treaty gone into effect as drafted, it would have afforded the republics a veto over the tax rates needed by the central government to



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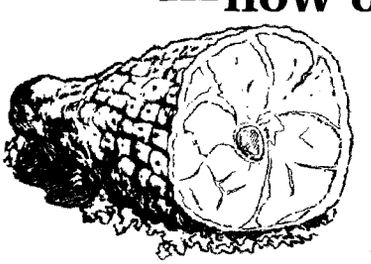

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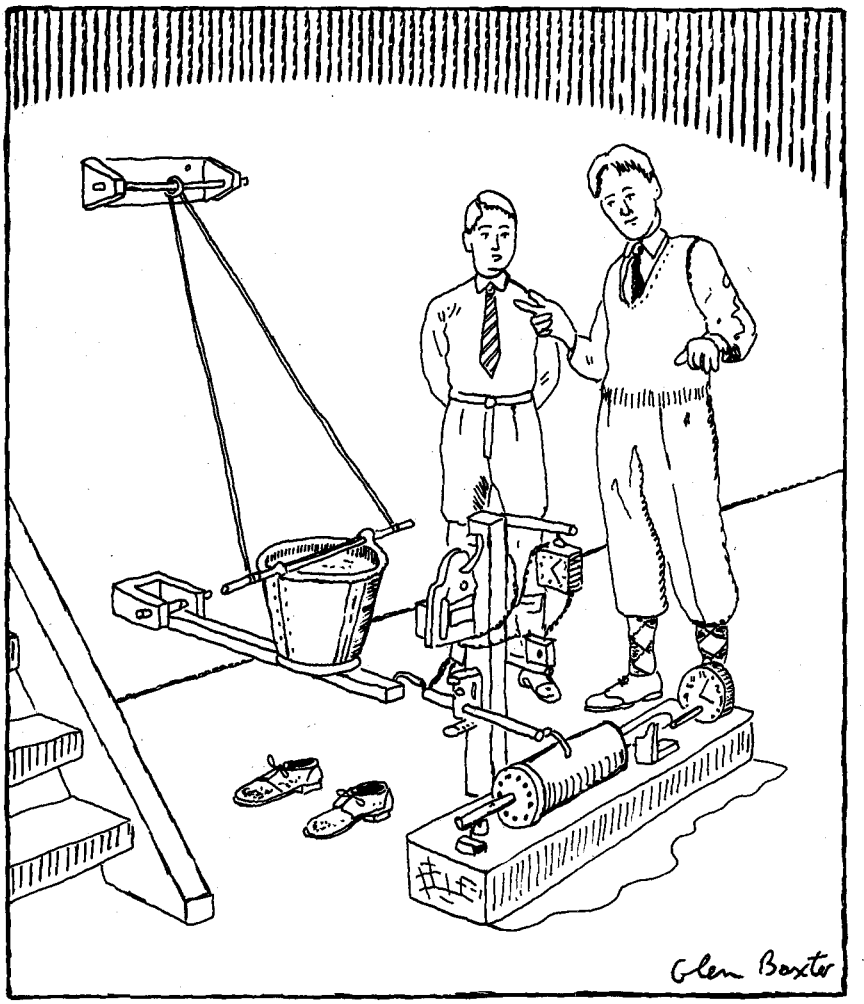

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finance its expenditures. No particular genius was required to foresee that the republics would never agree to the taxes necessary to maintain a conscript Army of more than three million soldiers, or any other large central bureaucracies. The treaty would have left the central bureaucrats with two alternatives: to liquidate the structures that provided their power and perquisites or to print more worthless rubles, and so add to the country's ruinous financial problems.

People who knew the conspirators, though, tended not to dwell on rational political motives but to recall incidents that emphasized the men's dishonesty. Aleksandr Tsipko, a scholar who had worked on the Central Committee staff in the early Gorbachev years, told me when I met him at his office in Moscow, at the Institute for International Economic and Political Research, that he had first encountered Gennady Yanayev in 1966, when Yanayev ran the Communist Youth League in the city of Gorky, and Tsipko worked for the league's newspaper, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*. Tsipko had gone to Gorky to write about a roundtable discussion on educational issues, but instead of the usual propaganda, he said, he had written a story that portrayed Yanayev, accurately, as a dogmatist. Yanayev retaliated by sending a mendacious report to Moscow, accusing Tsipko of being anti-Communist.

Vitaly Shlykov recounted a 1988 incident concerning the military budget. In analyzing Western economic capabilities for the Army's general staff, he had come to the conclusion that the *verkhushka* systematically exaggerated the military potential of the United States economy. Shlykov was convinced that America could not produce as many weapons as the generals told the Politburo it could, nor could it produce them as quickly. But when he tried to make this case he found that Marshal Akhromeyev, then the chief of staff, simply distorted the figures to buttress the old assumptions. When he tried to go around Akhromeyev, he found that Anatoly Lukyanov, who headed the Central Committee department that dealt with the military, refused to help. Shlykov was forced to retire. Lukyanov and Akhromeyev stayed on, and were eventually accused of playing fundamental roles in the conspiracy against Gorbachev.

Of all the alleged conspirators, Marshal Akhromeyev was the only one I had met; he had given me an interview in June, at an office in the Kremlin. Like Shlykov, I had come away with the impression that candor was not one of his distinguishing characteristics. In fact, I thought he had lied in response to several questions. The Marshal was a short, slender man with a stern expression. His epaulets bore the solitary large gold star of his rank, and the rows of campaign ribbons and decorations on the left breast of his crisp olive uniform extended so far down that they disappeared beneath the surface of the table he sat behind. He was not an affable man. When I asked him to tell me a little about his early years and his decision to become a soldier, he responded by asking, "And what for?"

Admiral William Crowe, the former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, spent a great deal of time with Akhromeyev in recent years, as relations between the rival military establishments grew friendlier, and he had told me that Akhromeyev had become both angry and depressed about the course of events in the Soviet Union. He had always been the type of officer who accepted the Party's authority without question, and he had been a loyal supporter of *perestroika* in its early years; in fact, during the arms-control negotiations in the second Reagan Administration he had won a reputation as the man who persuaded the *verkhushka* to accept the cuts that Gorbachev had deemed necessary. But in recent years, according to Crowe, the failure of Gorbachev's economic reforms and the prospect of the com-

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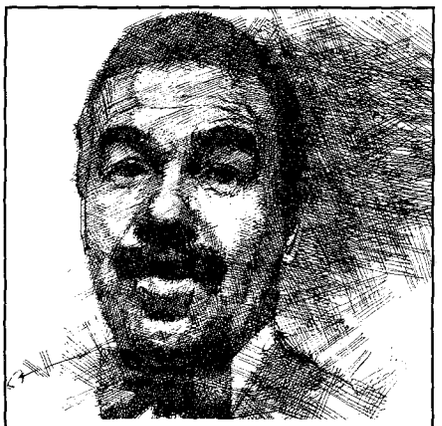

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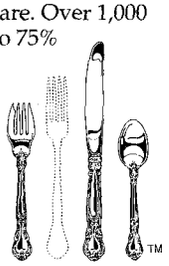

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plete dissolution of the empire that the Army had won in the Second World War had dismayed Akhromeyev. The Marshal spoke of this only obliquely to me, however, saying, "The reform of our society is proceeding very painfully."

Akhromeyev was more forthcoming about his current role. "I am the President's adviser on broad questions relating to the defense of the country and the armed forces, to negotiations on nuclear and conventional weapons," he told me. "Earlier, I met more often with him and reported to him personally on issues. Now the President is more concerned with internal political and economic questions, and we meet less often." I asked who else advised Gorbachev on military affairs, and he replied, "First of all, the Minister of Defense and the chief of the general staff." (The chief of the general staff was Mikhail Moiseyev.) "On concrete questions, they report to him, first of all. Of course, I participate."

Despite his assertion that he participated in Gorbachev's decision-making on military issues, Akhromeyev told me that he knew almost nothing about the Vilnius operation. "If you're interested in such questions, go to Vilnius, and find out there," he said. (As it happened, I had just been in Vilnius, and the local garrison there had referred questioners to Moscow.) "I know only what I read in the newspapers about these questions, and I don't get mixed up in them. It's not my duty right now. I consider it incorrect of you to ask."

A few days before our meeting, Yazov, Pugo, and Kryuchkov had asked the deputies, at a closed session of the Supreme Soviet, to back a proposal that in retrospect seemed to prefigure the August attempt to remove Gorbachev. The proposal involved transferring some of Gorbachev's powers to Prime Minister Pavlov. A few days later, Gorbachev had rather easily persuaded the Supreme Soviet to reject it. When I asked Akhromeyev about the role of the *verkhushka* in this effort, he told me that the proposal was a mere triviality. "That was just a minor thing," he said. "And, anyway, what of it?"

I said that in many governments it would be considered irregular for the Prime Minister to request powers that the President did not want to give him—especially if the Prime Minister

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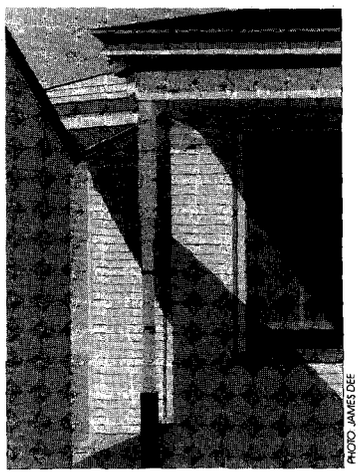

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did so with the backing of the Minister of Defense, the chief of the secret police, and the chief of the uniformed police.

"Well, we're in an unusual time in this country," Akhromeyev replied. "In an unusual time, there arise such collisions. I don't see anything unusual about it."

I asked the Marshal whether he thought there was any possibility that the Army might stage or participate in a coup against the central government.

"I'm tired of answering that question," he replied, vehemently. "Our Army is educated in the spirit of respect for its state and the higher organs of power. And the High Command is educated in the spirit of unquestioning obedience to law. For the past six years, there have been no such efforts, and there never will be. Our Army isn't capable of it. And it will never do it."

Naturally, I had not expected Akhromeyev to reply that, come to think of it, he and Yazov had been talking about the logistics of a coup just the other day. Nevertheless, I was struck in retrospect by his contempt for the truth—a contempt that his fellow-conspirators shared. They had spent their adult lives in the service of a government that lied routinely, both within its ranks and to its people. That might explain why they announced the creation of the State Committee on the Emergency Situation with a lie so bald that it only alienated people, and why they failed to grasp what had become quite apparent to many others by August: that the armed forces would not carry out an order to enforce a coup.

By the morning of August 21st, everyone in Russia could see how badly the plotters had miscalculated, and their remaining authority evaporated. Some of them tried to flee Moscow. Others were arrested in their offices. A festive, almost euphoric mood gripped the city. In the streets and on the subways, there seemed to be more couples smiling and kissing than ever before. As the tanks rolled out of the city, people handed the soldiers flowers, and exchanged high fives with them as if they were American basketball players. On Russian radio I heard a rap song whose refrain, loosely translated, was "Soviet power has taken it in the chops." Mayor Popov sent a

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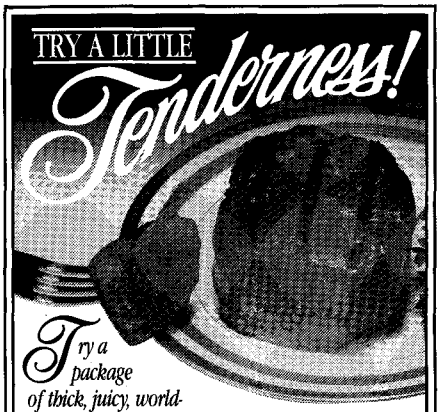

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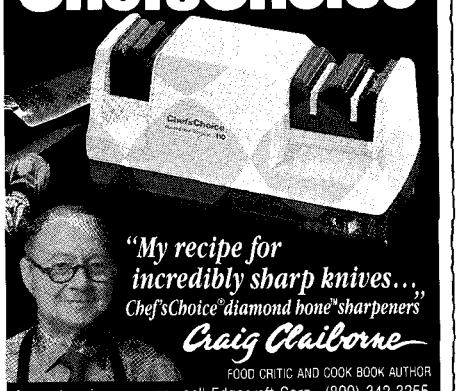

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crane to help the crowd tear down Feliks Dzerzhinsky's statue.

In his Kremlin office, Marshal Akhromeyev hanged himself. A few days later, thieves broke into his grave at night and stripped the uniform from his corpse. A friend told me that it would probably bring about fifteen hundred rubles on the black market for military memorabilia.

ON September 2nd, twelve days after the coup collapsed, Aleksandr Tsalko and some two thousand other members of the Congress of People's Deputies gathered at the Kremlin to see what they could and should salvage from the wreckage of the Soviet Union. The conspirators' failure to preserve the union by force had, of course, accelerated its dissolution. The various republics, alarmed and emboldened by what they had seen in Moscow, began leaving the union even before the tanks left the city. Estonia declared its independence on August 20th. Over the next few days, Latvia, Byelorussia, and the Ukraine did the same. Then came Moldavia and Azerbaijan. The centrifugal tendency seemed irresistible and placed Yeltsin and his government in an awkward position. Many Russians feared that a precipitous dissolution of the union would be disastrous, causing a complete breakdown of the economy and a wave of refugee Russians, returning to their homeland from the republics and demanding jobs, food, and housing that did not exist. Yet, without contradicting his most fundamental avowed beliefs, Yeltsin could not argue against the republics' right to secede.

Instead, Yeltsin participated in a reconciliation effort led by Mikhail Gorbachev. On the eve of the Congress session, Gorbachev and the leaders of ten of the original fifteen republics, including Yeltsin, agreed on a vague plan to establish a transitional confederation in place of the old Soviet Union. In the future, the plan suggested, the republics would manage their own economies, and even belong individually to the United Nations. They would be able to define their own participation in any new union, or decline to participate.

This transitional Soviet Union would be a much looser structure than the one envisioned by the union treaty that the conspirators had acted to prevent. Although the Congress contained many

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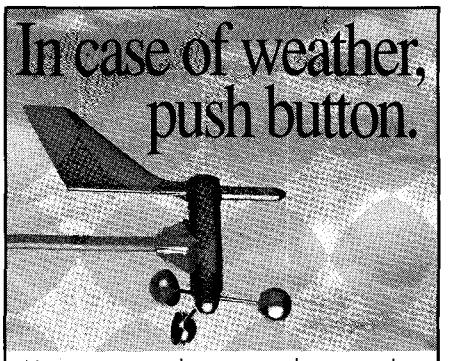

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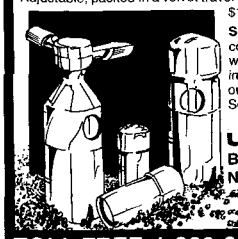

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reformers like Tsalko, conservative apparatchiks had managed to win most of its seats in 1989. As the session convened, the glowering relief portrait of Lenin no longer hung over the Kremlin's Palace of Congresses, but the conservatives still constituted a majority. It did not seem clear to me that they would vote, in effect, to do away with the union that gave them their power and livelihood. But over the next three days Gorbachev lectured, pounded the podium, and warned them repeatedly that the country was on the verge of collapse. He improvised as he went along. He adjourned to listen to proposals from the two largest republics, the Ukraine and Russia. He added some language about central control of nuclear weapons to allay fears being expressed in the West. He cut off the microphones of deputies who failed to stick to the agenda as he defined it. The Presidents of several republics held caucuses with their delegations and urged them to support the proposal. When it came to the final voting, the necessary two-thirds of the deputies inserted their plastic cards into the electronic boxes mounted on their chairs and did as they were told, voting yes.

In the days that followed, headlines in the West spoke of the "former" Soviet Union, and made much use of Trotsky's prediction about the dustbin of history. But when I discussed what had happened with Tsalko and other deputies I found that they had voted for the proposal in the belief that they were saving the Soviet Union, not dissolving it. The events of August had abruptly pushed political thinking in Moscow toward the view that in order to reconstitute the union in a more benign form the Russians would first have to show a genuine willingness to let it fall apart. That is what the deputies did.

"I voted for it," Tsalko said of the transitional order. "But I don't think the process of dissolution will go to the end."

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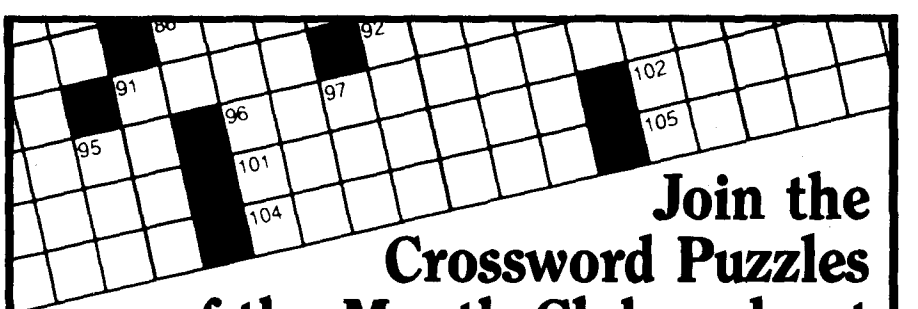

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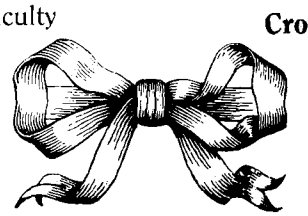

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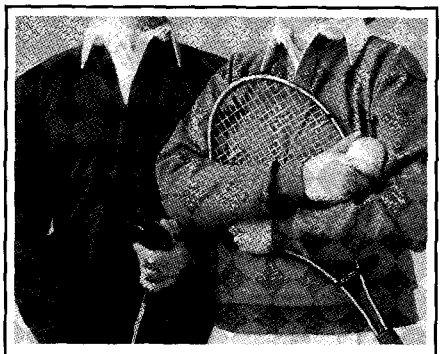

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parents. Before August, its strength had overwhelmed all the arguments that Gorbachev and the conservatives made in favor of a union. But if that urge is satisfied, if people feel they have a real choice, the theory goes, they will start to calculate things more pragmatically. The Ukraine and ethnic groups like the Kazakhs, seeking capital, may be inclined to listen to Western bankers who counsel retaining a central financial apparatus capable of maintaining a stable currency and paying the country's debts. The Armenians, who are Christians, will face the need to defend themselves against ancient enemies in the Islamic countries around them. They may wish to preserve a military alliance. The model that Tsalko and other deputies cite now is not the old Soviet Union, or the old Russian Empire, but the modern European Community—a union based on democratic principles and voluntary membership.

In the chaos and deprivation of the present, that seems extraordinarily optimistic. The centrifugal energy in the country has not exhausted itself. All the republics, including Russia, have reason to feel victimized by the old system, and they are all likely to want to redress those grievances in any new system. Moreover, there are as many potential civil wars as there are republics and autonomous regions. Several years ago, the State Department drew a map showing thirty-two separate regions in the Soviet Union where two or more nationalities claimed the same piece of land. On December 1st, the Ukraine will elect a President and vote on independence. If it rejects any form of union, it will take a fifth of the Soviet population (many of them Russians) and the country's most fertile farmland with it, throwing the viability of a new union into doubt.

Still, Aleksandr Tsalko and the other defenders of the White House inherit a tradition that includes strategic sacrifice. Since General Kutuzov gave up Moscow, temporarily, to Napoleon, the Russians have known how to retreat, regroup, and recover. "Let them choose what they want," Tsalko said of the republics in our last conversation. "I think there will eventually be a process of consolidation."

—Robert Cullen

(A second Report from Moscow, discussing the aftermath of the coup, will appear next week.)

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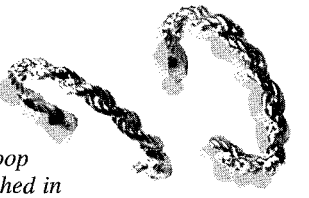

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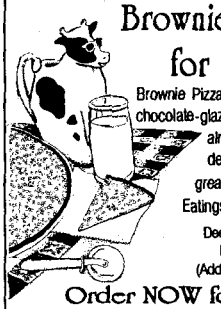

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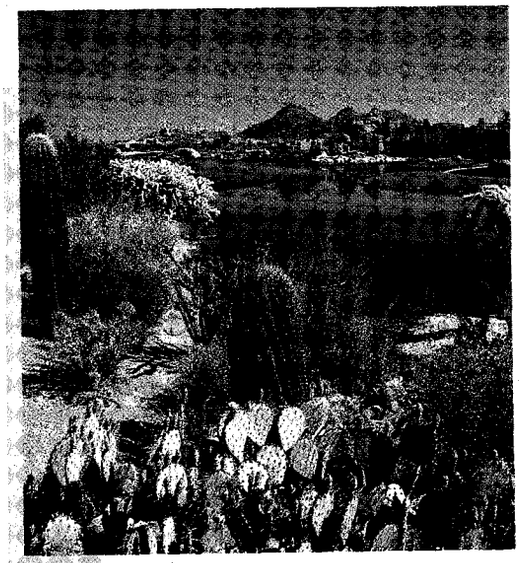
Then there's the Grand Canyon. A visit here is like journeying to another world. Viewed at different hours of the day, its spires, slopes, precipices, and buttes appear to move as they change from red to gold to pink to rust. Several climate zones, each with its own distinct flora and minerals, can be found when travelling down into the canyon by mule or on foot. The South Rim is the starting point for such a journey, as well as an excellent vantage point for those who prefer to look down on this topographical marvel.



Phoenix features gorgeous golf courses

George Hunter

Native American culture is accessible throughout the state

Native American culture is accessible throughout the state. In northeastern Arizona, where Hopis and Navajos make their homes, visitors are welcome on the reservations. Vividly colored pottery, superbly crafted silver, and the world-renowned Navajo rugs, with their unique geometric designs, can be found at the Navajo Tribal Museum at Window Rock, as well as in small towns throughout the reservation. The area also contains the ruins of several hundred villages and spectacular cliff dwellings decorated with pictographs in Walnut Canyon National Monument. In eastern Arizona's high country, the White Mountain Apache reservation lies in the center of thousands of square miles of lush mountain wilderness, cool lakes, abundant wildlife — and the largest ski resort in the Southwest.

Magnificent scenery and superb recreational opportunities can be found throughout the state. Glen Canyon National Recreation Center in northern Arizona includes Lake Powell, where fishers cast for striped bass and walleye, and hikers can enjoy daytrips or longer wilderness treks. The Colorado River Valley, which lies along the California border, tempts outdoor sports enthusiasts with superb freshwater fishing and watersports.

At the south end of Colorado River country, adjacent to Mexico, is sunny Yuma. Its nearby lakes and wildlife refuges are popular with canoeists, campers, fishers, and waterskiers. Historic Yuma Territorial Prison, overlooking the river, once held such frontier baddies as "Buckskin" Frank Leslie and "Heartless" Pearl Heart.

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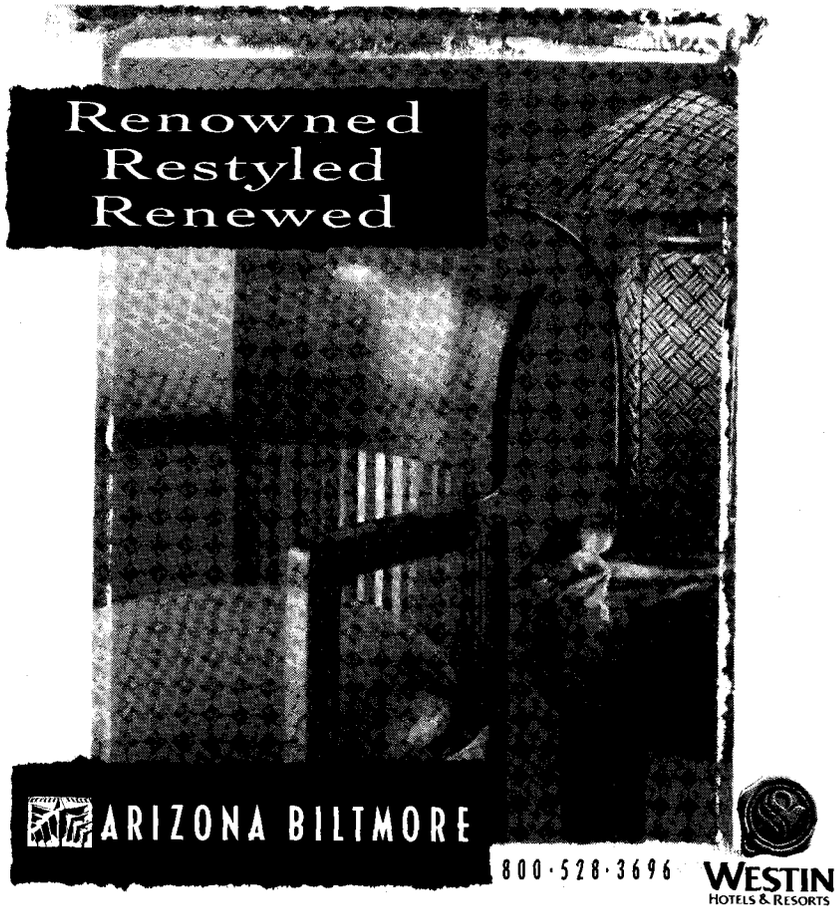

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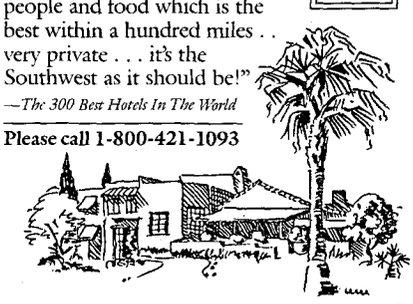

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A hundred and ten years after its heyday, the town of Tombstone is still attracting visitors, although it's no longer one of the richest and most lawless places in the Southwest. Many of this national historic site's buildings have now been restored, including the Bird Cage Theatre, last of the West's great honky-tonks; the Crystal Palace saloon; the OK Corral, where Wyatt Earp shot it out with the Clanton Gang; and the infamous Boot Hill graveyard.

Of course, Arizona also has cities with the most modern attractions — nightlife, theatre, fine restaurants, museums, galleries, shopping, and golf and tennis facilities that are second to none.

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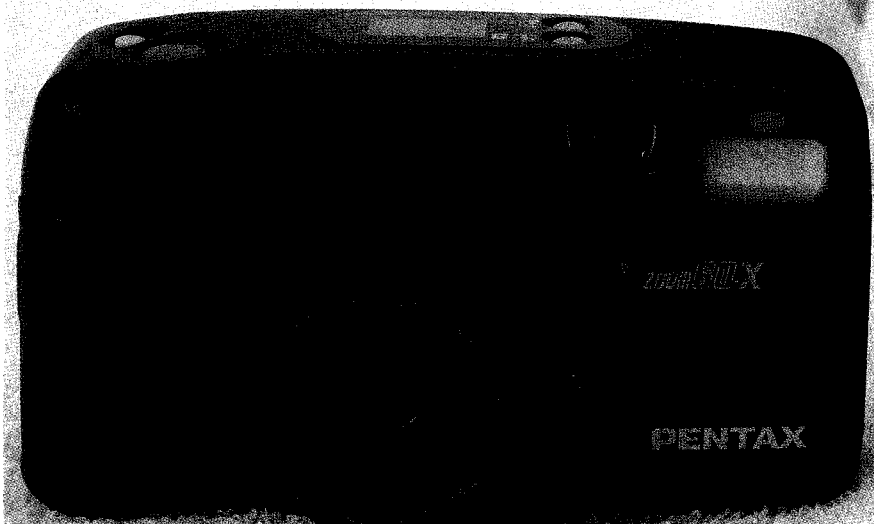

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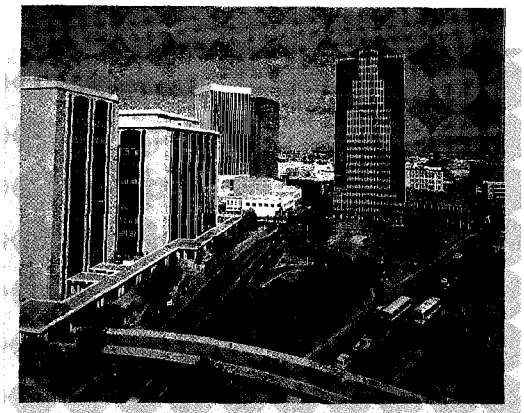

Tom Mackie

Downtown Tucson is the height of modernity

Located in the northern high country, Flagstaff, the gateway to the Grand Canyon, is the home of the Lowell Observatory, the Pioneer Historical Museum, the Coconino Center for the Arts, the Museum of Northern Arizona, and Northern Arizona University. There's also an abundance of shops offering regional arts and crafts, as well as excellent downhill and cross-country skiing.

In the high desert of southern Arizona, ringed by mountain ranges, is Tuscon. Once a small Spanish walled outpost, the "Old Pueblo" is now a bustling metropolitan area that offers a wide variety of cultural events, world-class resorts, restaurants, and nightlife in a setting enriched by adobe buildings and Spanish missions. Pine-covered mountains, quiet desert canyon waterfalls, and timeless forests of giant saguaro cacti are just minutes away. The world-famous Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, the Old Tuscon movie location, and Mission San Xavier del Bac are just a few of the area's many fascinating sites.

Gil Kisch is a free-lance writer living in Leonia, N.J.

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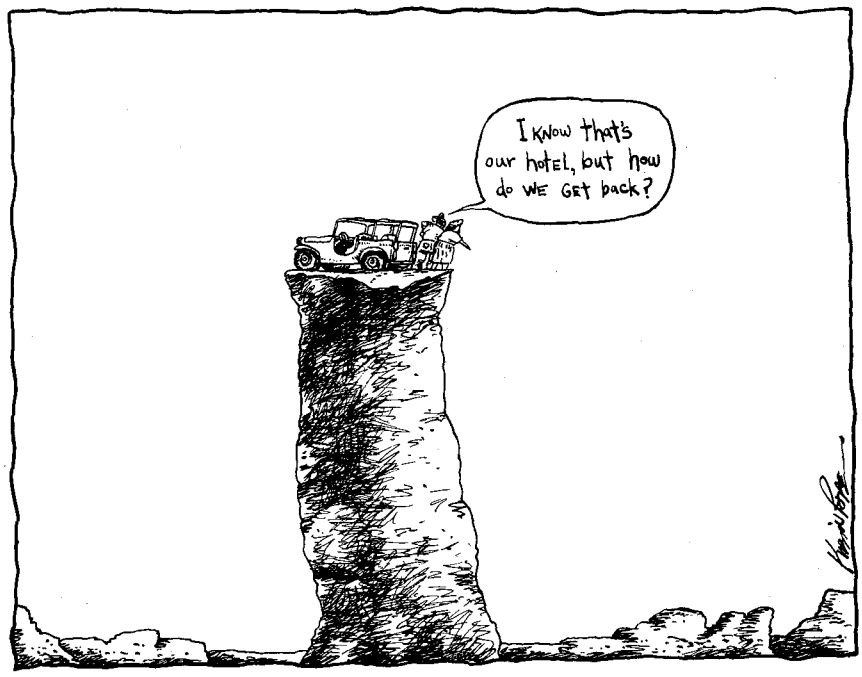

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THE THEATRE

Johnny Boy

JOHN PATRICK SHANLEY, in his "Beggars in the House of Plenty," begins with what appears to be an edged send-up of the Irish Catholic family and ends up, overwhelmed with bitterness, by skewering it. The play, at the Manhattan Theatre Club, is hands down Mr. Shanley's most accomplished work to date, which is saying a lot, and the weapon, almost to the end, is comedy—satiric, surrealistic, both broad and sharp. At the opening, his hero, named—probably not accidentally—Johnny, is five years old. (He is very well portrayed—boy and man—by Loren Dean.) His father, a rough, cruel butcher (Daniel von Bargen), enters straight from the slaughterhouse, cleaver in hand and wearing a bloodstained apron and shouting "Cavities!" He soon orders his elder son, Joey (Jon Tenney), a loser and high-school dropout who's now a sailor, to sing "Danny Boy." The boys' mother (Dana Ivey), shabby, discouraged, and bowlegged in short socks, comes in dragging a laundry basket behind her. Their beautiful sister (Laura Linney), the essence of virginity, appears from time to time in a white wedding gown with veil; their aunt, a nun (Jayne Haynes), is on hand to murmur, "May he rest in peace" at every mention—there are quite a few—of the dead, and to state her firm, depressing view of her niece's marriage.

The action can be considered a cold-blooded study in family mayhem, with young Johnny, growing slowly to manhood, its principal victim. He nevertheless has a built-in resilience that his mother and brother lack. (There is a flashback scene of Miss Ivey as a pretty young woman, smiling happily. Joey, though, is defeated and out for the count.) All this is played in a volatile, inventive, and impulsive style, and is often very funny. The end, unfortunately, cracks under the weight of feeling and turns bleak, much to the detriment of the play. Comedy, as usual, had been doing the job just fine.

Comparisons with Christopher Durang's "Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All for You" are, of course, inevitable, and the two plays make an interesting contrast in sensibility—one hot, to put it broadly, and the other cool. The performance spins by under Mr. Shanley's direction, and Santo Loquasto's setting, in which barbed wire is festooned with Christmas decorations, is as eloquent as any of the words or any of the acting. Lighting by Natasha Katz, costumes by Lindsay W. Davis. —EDITH OLIVER

Five Sisters

THE Abbey Theatre is in town with "Dancing at Lughnasa," a wistful autobiographical Brian Friel play, which opened in Dublin in 1990 and went on to win the Olivier Award in London this year. The play—which is at the Plymouth, with the original cast (except in three instances), and in essentially the same production (designed by Joe Vaněk) as in London—combines Irish desperation with Chekhovian languor, and how you respond to it depends a good deal on your personality and preoccupations: either you will find it lovely and lyrical or else it will strike you as the memory play from Hell.

Guiding us through the play is a sort of Tom Wingfield author-narrator, Michael (Gerard McSorley), who directs our attention to a particular fortnight in 1936, which he associates with the appearance in his life of two things: a wireless set and his Uncle Jack, back at the family farm, in Donegal, after twenty-five years as a missionary in Africa. Throughout the play, Michael alternates between playing narrator and playing himself as a seven-year-old. (This is the same device Mr. Shanley uses in "Beggars in the House of Plenty." The convention seems to be catching.) As narrator, Michael tells us not only what we are about to see acted out but how he felt about it and,

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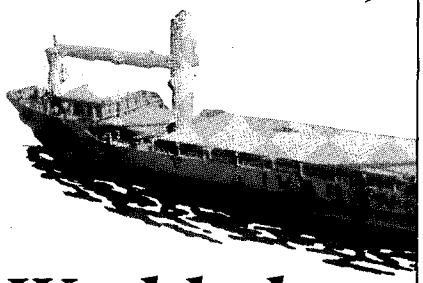

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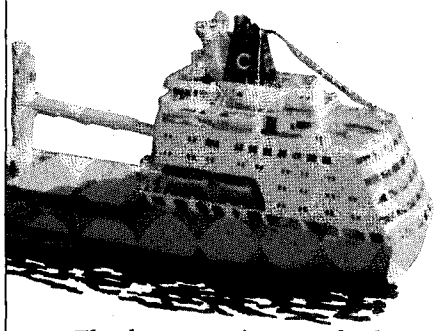

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by implication, how it has affected his life. He describes the other characters, and then we watch them live up to his description. There's proper Aunt Kate (Rosaleen Linehan), the eldest of the five Mundy sisters, who teaches school; Aunt Maggie (Dearbhla Molloy), the "joker" in the family; Aunt Agnes (Brid Brennan), who at thirty-five already seems like an old lady; Aunt Rose (Brid Ni Neachtain), a bit simple in the head; and Michael's mother, Chris (Catherine Byrne), the youngest, who bore him out of wedlock. The sisters knit and fold laundry, feed the chickens, and argue about who will make tea. They go into the village and return with gossip and news. And they look after Jack (Donal Donnelly), a former Army chaplain, whose years in Africa have left him somewhat the worse for malaria and with a tendency to speak in Swahili and mistake his sisters for his houseboy. Meanwhile, Michael's wastrel father, Gerry (Robert Gwilym), a travelling salesman and dime-store charmer, is in town on a rare visit, and keeps dropping by.

People are always comparing Friel to Chekhov. But Chekhov wrote about relationships between people; this is a play about themes—paganism and the harvest and the industrial revolution and that unfair and disappointing thing called life. Friel clearly believes that if you have a good trope you should run with it. There's a scene in which Aunt Maggie comes out with her hands cupped and tells the little boy that she has something to show him. She tells him to watch carefully, then opens her hands (they're empty) and says, "Did you see it?" Michael says yes, he did, and she says, "Wasn't it wonderful?. . . The trouble is, just one quick glimpse, that's all you ever get." After that, the metaphors come thick and fast: life as a dance competition being supervised by a panel of blind-drunk judges; the radio that gives such pleasure but only plays for a short time before going on the fritz; the father who says he thought of bringing a gift, only they didn't have the bicycle in the right color; even cigarettes come in a pack that is one short. Then, there's all the stuff about paganism and ritual: references to face painting and animal sacrifice, resurrection and ancestral spirits, and people going up in flames, ceremonial hats, and the festival of Lugh, god of the harvest. And Friel makes exhaustive

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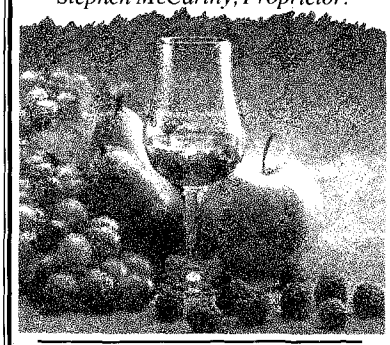

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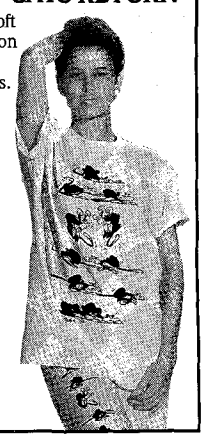

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use of the dancing motif—all of it adding up to the idea that a little bit of pagan abandon in our Christian lives might not be a bad thing.

The number of speeches that begin "I remember" is beyond belief—speeches full of thematic information. And the conventions are so tiresome. One of the sisters is discovered to be missing, and a melodramatic conversation ensues. No sooner has the discussion ceased and a search been organized than she's spotted coming up the path. Two characters dance for a protracted period. No sooner have they left the stage than the radio gives out. And what's all that wheat doing in the kitchen? The set is one of those overly sophisticated designs which, rather than offering subtle or subliminal information, keep you actively puzzling over how they're supposed to work.

Some of this, of course, is the fault of the director, Patrick Mason—for example, the fact that the acting is so labored. We don't need Rose to keep making village-idiot faces or Chris to keep reminding us, by gasping and leaping about, that she's a breathless ingénue. The women are all playing various stereotypes, while Mr. Donnelly is playing a literary device rather than a person. Mr. McSorley seems to be enunciating for an audience of non-English speakers, and it takes you a long time to realize that Mr. Gwilym is playing not a mental defective but only a Welshman.

It's tedious watching desperate people who are resigned to their fate; what's interesting is watching desperate people deceiving themselves. On the other hand, becoming resigned to desperation can be terribly interesting to *read* about, because it's a process. I can't help thinking that "Dancing at Lughnasa" would have made a beautiful short story or novella. The narrative bits—where Michael addresses the audience directly—are where all the good writing is. They're also the only place where any authentic voice comes across. And if you're telling a story—one that's gripping on its own terms—you don't have to cram in a lot of literary stuffing.

—Mimi Kramer

•

Because of staff reductions, some faculty members will be given teaching responsibilities.—*Daily Beacon, newspaper of the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.*

Grim news indeed.

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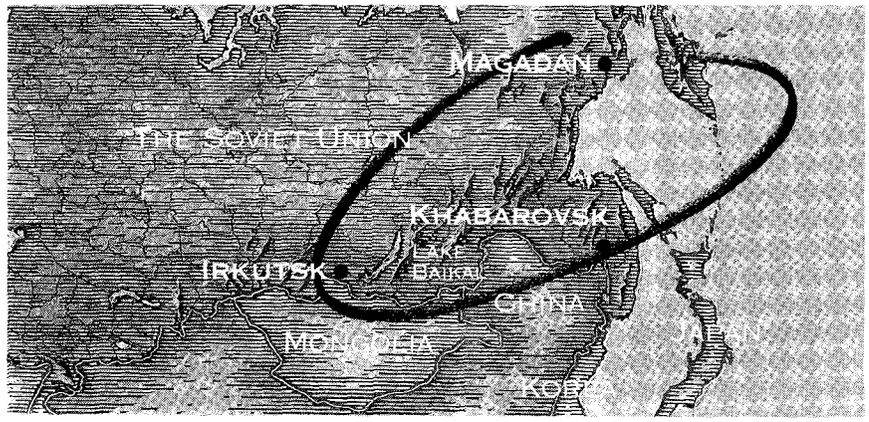

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JAZZ

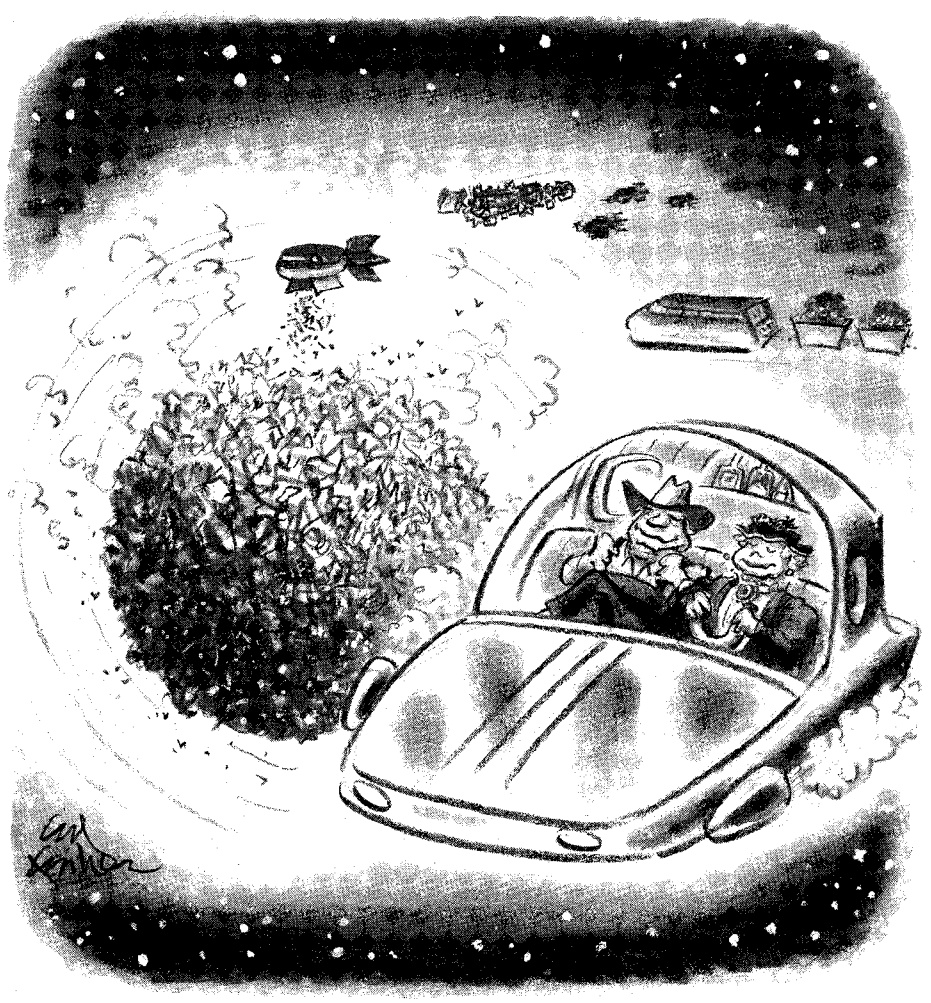
Lady Day

COLUMBIA has released the ninth and final CD of "The Quintessential Billie Holiday." The recordings begin in 1933, when she made her first (very assured) recordings with Benny Goodman, and they end in 1942, when a union recording ban went into effect, and her brilliant ingenuousness had begun to harden. For the first time, the sessions are complete and in chronological order. Twenty-six of the hundred and fifty-three numbers in the set have been unavailable, except on rare 78s, for more than fifty years. It is now possible to see the whole beautiful and invaluable Billie Holiday landscape of the thirties.

In June of 1937, Billie Holiday, backed lustrously by Buck Clayton, Lester Young, and Jo Jones, made an extraordinary recording of an inconsequential Tin Pan Alley tune called "Me, Myself and I." The lyric ends, "Me, myself and I are all in love with you." The song could be a description of Holiday herself, for she was at least three different people. The most famous was the tortured tabloid figure, who, desiccated and dying, was arrested in her hospital bed by the New York police for possession of drugs. (This Holiday, now largely legendary, is very much with us—in movies, on the stage, and in novels, poems, biographies, and autobiographies, including her own hocus-pocus "Lady Sings the Blues.") The second Holiday was the singer, the statuesque presence, standing on the stage with a gardenia in her hair, her elbows bent at her sides, her left hand snapping silently on the afterbeat, her head tilted back, almost visible music pouring out of her. (This Holiday can be heard, at various removes, in the singing of Frank Sinatra, Julie Wilson, Nancy Harrow, Peggy Lee, and Susannah McCorkle.) The third Billie Holiday was almost invisible. She was the insecure child who, less than twenty years younger than her ineffectual parents, never had the chance to grow up. Battered by racism, by hoody music-business people, and by a succession of manipulative lovers (she married twice), she hid behind a violent temper and a foul mouth, and searched most of her life for solace in drugs and drink. (This Holiday remains as elusive as ever.)

Billie Holiday was born in Philadelphia in April of 1915 to Sadie Fagan and Clarence Holiday, unmarried teenagers. She was raised in Baltimore, and she was a wild one. At ten, she was sent to a Catholic reformatory, the House of the Good Shepherd for Colored Girls, and at twelve she was a prostitute. When she was fourteen or fifteen, she moved to New York. She had been singing since she was thirteen, and several years after she moved north she was discovered in a Harlem club by Mildred Bailey and Red Norvo. Billie made her first important recordings in 1935, when she sang "I Wished On the Moon," "What a Little Moonlight Can Do," "Miss Brown to You," and "A Sunbonnet Blue" with a small pickup band that included Benny Goodman, Roy Eldridge, Ben Webster, Teddy Wilson, and Cozy Cole. She was already scratching out a living in such Harlem clubs as the Yeah Man, the Hot-Cha, Pod's and Jerry's, the Alhambra Grill, and Dickie Wells's Clam House. Her career was never smooth. She took her first downtown job at the Famous Door, on Fifty-second Street. Working opposite the roughneck white New Orleans trombonist George Brunies, she was told not to sit with the customers between sets—to stay out of sight. She lasted four days. Then she joined Fletcher Henderson at the Grand Terrace in Chicago; the manager, Ed Fox, shouted

TOMORROW'S ASTRONOMY:



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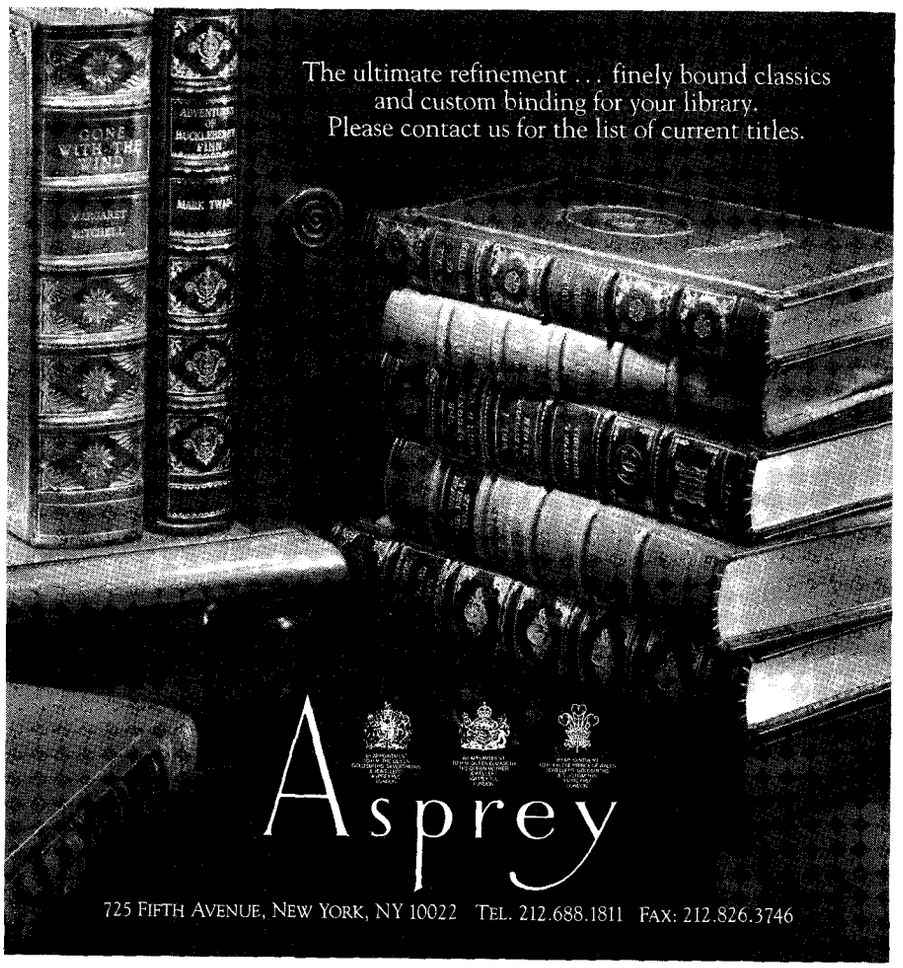
at her, told her she sang "too slow," and fired her after a single evening. She went back to Fifty-second Street, alternating at the Onyx Club with the violinist Stuff Smith. Smith became jealous of all the applause she got, and she was fired again. She retreated to Monroe's Uptown House, in Harlem, and, in 1937, joined Count Basie, leaving under mysterious circumstances after less than a year. Then, putting her head in the lion's mouth, she went with Artie Shaw, who fended off the bigots until Maria Kramer, the owner of the Hotel Lincoln, in New York, where Shaw had landed an important job, made her use the service entrance and the freight elevator, and she quit.

She was given a reprieve in 1939. Barney Josephson, the owner of the new and completely integrated Café Society Downtown, hired her, and she stayed for a (more or less) peaceable year. Josephson did not allow his performers to use marijuana at the club, and between shows Billie would sometimes get in a cab and go up to Central Park and smoke pot. "One night she came back and I could tell by her eyes that she was really high," Josephson once said. "She finished her first number and I guess she didn't like the way the audience reacted. Performers often wear just gowns and slippers, no underwear, and at the end of the song Billie turned her back to the audience, bent over, flipped up her gown, and walked off the floor." Billie worked on Fifty-second Street in the forties, and it was there that she began wearing her famous gardenia. The singer Sylvia Syms claims that she was responsible for Billie's first putting the flower in her hair. She used to hang around Billie on the Street, and one night, at Kelly's Stable, Billie burned her hair with a curling iron just before she was to go onstage. Syms ran down the street to the Three Deuces and bought a gardenia from the hat-check girl, and Billie fastened it on the burned place. "I can remember her. . . at the Onyx Club," Syms has said, "coming down those little stairs in the back and the lights softening and the room becoming silent and her moving onto the stage and looking just like a panther."

In 1947, she was arrested for the possession of drugs, and her life began going downhill. She spent nine months in the federal women's reformatory in Alderson, West Virginia. The New



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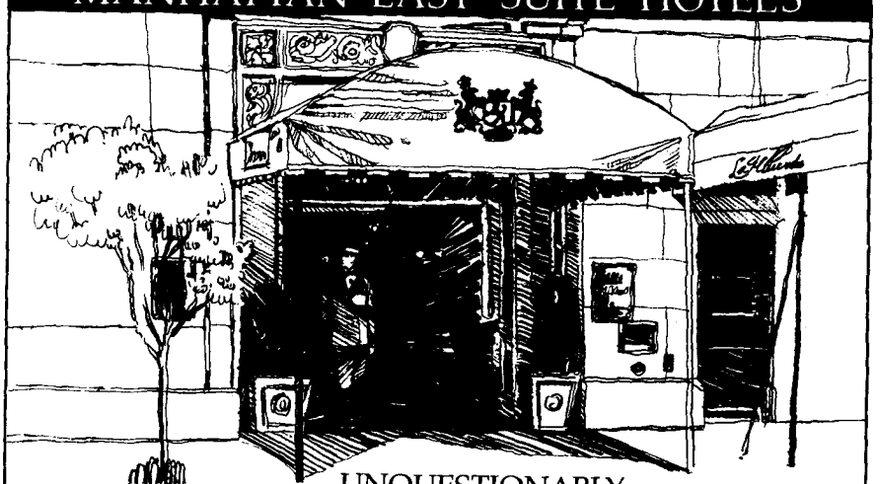

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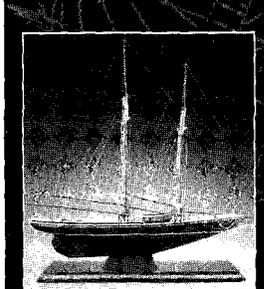

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York police revoked her cabaret card, and she was never again able to work legally in a New York night club. (Without a cabaret card, entertainers could not appear in any place where liquor was sold. The police supervised this cruel, archaic practice until the late sixties, when it finally ended.) She was allowed to give concerts in New York, and, of course, she could work in clubs elsewhere. She earned a considerable amount of money, but it slipped through her fingers or was stolen by hangers-on and dishonest managers. Drugs, then heavy drinking began to affect her voice. But the old lightsome Holiday would surface occasionally. She sang, startlingly, like the bluebird of 1937 on a European tour she made in 1954. She also sang well on the CBS television show "The Sound of Jazz" in 1957, and her sequence—she sat on a high stool, her hair in a ponytail—has been shown so often on television that it has become the image most people have of her. She died in 1959, at the age of forty-four. She had fifteen fifty-dollar bills strapped to one of her legs and seventy cents in the bank.

NO one had ever sung like Billie Holiday when she first appeared. She was deceptive. She made her voice sound smaller, more little-girlish, than it actually was; it gave the impression of being completely homemade. (She took her rhythmic ideas from Louis Armstrong and her poise from Bessie Smith.) Her articulation was so clear that she seemed to speak her lyrics, and her vibrato let out just enough emotion. She had the uncanny ability to digest new songs at a recording session and sing them—improvise on them, really—as if she had known them for years. Billie was a rhythm machine. No jazz instrumentalist has had a more flexible sense of time, and it was infallible. In such recordings as "It's Too Hot for Words," "Foolin' Myself," "I Can't Pretend," "I Must Have That Man," "I Don't Know If I'm Coming or Going," "You're Just a No Account," and "A Sailboat in the Moonlight" she disconnects each song from its chump-chump-chump rhythm, and, for the two minutes or so that her vocal lasts, makes the song float along somewhere behind the beat, thereby setting up an irresistible, swinging tug-of-war between the original tempo and her version of it. This freeing effect was doubled when Lester Young accompanied her. They were twins rhythmically and tonally, and while she sang he would improvise a soft countermelody behind her—applauding her, caressing her, welding their voices. (Young died just four months before Billie; their voices in decline, faltering and bare, had remained much alike.) These passages—in "I'll Never Be the Same," "A Sailboat in the Moonlight," "Born to Love"—are incomparable lullabies.

In the late thirties, Billie began to take herself seriously. Her morose, indelible recording of "Strange Fruit" (done not for Columbia but for Commodore), a devastating song about lynching, became something of an event, and she began to be courted by liberals and lefties. Her voice grew heavier, she used dramatic dying notes, and her larking, daring quality diminished. She lost some of her rhythmic agility. She still sang very well—better, indeed, than anyone else—but the joy and the quickstepping intensity were less apparent. This new seriousness persisted through the forties and was underlined by the strings and bouncy big bands she was given as accompaniment. (By this time, Columbia had dropped her and she had switched to Decca. All thirty-six of the numbers she recorded for the label have just been issued on two CDs, as "The Complete Decca Recordings.") Then, around 1950, her voice took on a subtly dismaying hue. Her undertones and low notes began to sound almost burnt; they took on an acrid quality. By the mid-fifties, only the outlines of her original style were in place. Her voice came and went, just as Mabel Mercer's did in her last years, and she often used a gravelly parlando. She refused to let on that anything had changed, and this bravery gave her a confusing majesty.

But we don't have to listen to her sad later work. (Much of it is available on Verve CDs.) Instead, we can turn to "The Quintessential Billie Holiday." The great numbers in the set are sometimes side by side with Tin Pan Alley songs that are so bad not even she gets them off the ground. But after she pushes an "It's Easy to Blame the Weather" or an "Under a Blue Jungle Moon" before her, she turns around and does a "More Than You Know" or a "My Man" that makes you shiver.

—WHITNEY BALLIETT

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THE CURRENT CINEMA

Under One Roof

OVER the last twenty years, the prolific English writer and director Mike Leigh has created an extraordinarily rich body of work for television, the theatre, and the cinema, and very little of it has been seen by American audiences. Most of us on this side of the Atlantic became aware of Leigh only a couple of years ago, when his feature "High Hopes" was released here. That film, which was simultaneously a riotous satire on British class consciousness and a rueful meditation on the Thatcherite transformation of everyday life, showed a startlingly original sensibility. "High Hopes" was loose, playful, exploratory; it felt, that is, more like the work of an enthusiastic first-time filmmaker than like that of a mature, established artist. And Leigh's new movie, "Life Is Sweet," has the same youthful quality—the exuberance and the autobiographical-seeming emotional intimacy of a first film. In the past couple of weeks, I've seen, on videotape, Leigh's actual first feature, which was shot in 1971, as well as seven of the TV films he made between the early seventies and the late eighties, and these films, along with "High Hopes" and "Life Is Sweet," trace a pattern of artistic development unlike that of any other contemporary filmmaker. It's just about impossible to detect any advance in technical sophistication from his earliest works to his most recent ones; neither his visual ideas nor his sense of dramatic structure has become noticeably more "professional" over the years. One film, from whatever period, looks much like any other. Most of them carry the peculiar credit "Devised and Directed by Mike Leigh," because his pieces are the products of workshop-style collaboration with his casts: the stories evolve from the actors' improvisations on the characters that the director has given them. This is, of course, a risky method of making feature-length films, and other directors who have tried it have usually produced drab, aggressively tedious works, with a lot of shouting and encounter-session truthtelling. Mike Leigh has succeeded in avoiding the pitfalls of the group-improvisation approach to dramatic composition, because he refuses to force meanings out of the situations that he sets up. He proceeds from genuine curiosity about how people live and how they manage to get along with each other, and his filmmaking method is a way of insuring that each new set of characters and circumstances will be looked at from a fresh, unbiased perspective. He's interested not in demonstrating general, abstract truths but in discovering small, particular ones, so he could go on making this sort of film forever without having to worry about repeating himself. Every time, Leigh and his actors are starting from scratch, and he shapes the films so that the initial excitement of exploring characters can still be felt in the finished product.

In "Life Is Sweet" Leigh takes us into the domestic life of a lower-middle-class family in Middlesex. The characters are, by conventional standards, ordinary people, but they aren't dreary, and their actions aren't predictable; the movie doesn't treat anyone as a type. Wendy (Alison Steadman) is an attractive, ebullient middle-aged woman who works in a children's-clothing shop and conducts dance classes for little girls. She's always on the move, always doing something, and she accompanies her activities with a steady stream of chatter and jokes and high-pitched nasal laughter. Wendy is hilariously tireless, but she doesn't wear her family (or us) out. She isn't self-important; she buzzes around without insisting that anyone pay special attention to her. Her husband, Andy (Jim Broadbent), a chef who supervises the staff of a huge institutional kitchen, has a more phlegmatic sort of charm. He's an amiable dawdler, a guy who starts ambitious home-improvement projects and never quite gets around to finishing them. On his days off, he sets out, with the best of intentions, for his shed at the back of the yard, and then spends a bit of time meditating on the junk and bric-a-brac that he's accumulated over the years; then, maybe, a pal drops by, they chat awhile, have a beer, go for a quick ride; and when they get back it's time for tea and another day has somehow slipped away. Wendy and Andy are

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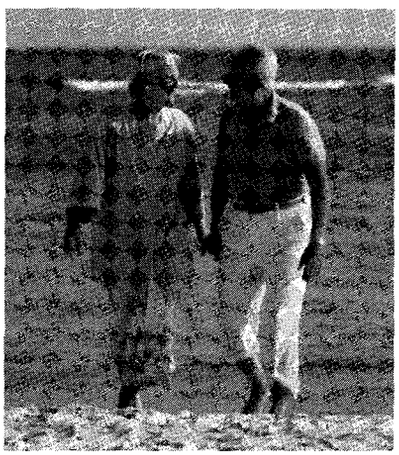

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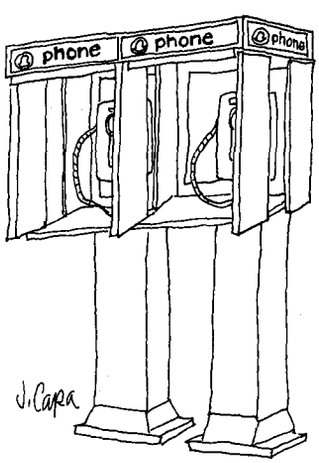
the parents of twins, Natalie (Claire Skinner) and Nicola (Jane Horrocks), who live at home. The twins are probably a year or two out of school, and they're ludicrously unalike. Natalie is a quiet, serious, dignified girl with a tidy short haircut. Sensibly, she has learned a trade: she's a plumber. Nicola, however, is a parents' nightmare. Her only occupation seems to be to make everyone aware, at every moment, of how much she hates her life. Hiding behind glasses and a mess of straggly hair, she responds with snarls and contemptuous epithets to even the most innocuous attempts at conversation; she generally refuses to eat, because she has a horror of fat (she's excruciatingly thin); and, although she doesn't appear to derive any pleasure from the company of her parents and her sister, she never leaves the house—she's always hanging about, looking sullen and neurotically alert, waiting for the opportunity to blurt out something shrill and horrible and bring everybody down. Nicola also has an impressive array of nervous tics: hair-tugging, face-scratching, the works.

At the beginning of "Life Is Sweet," Leigh just plops us into the middle of this family's unruly everyday life. He doesn't give us an obvious narrative hook—a clear sense of what the story is going to be or what sort of dramatic revelations he may have in store for us. And, despite Nicola's relentless negativity, the tone is light and casual. We sense right away that her bratty outbursts are simply accepted as part of the normal texture of life in this household; they're annoying, but they don't spark the flaming rows that Nicola seems to hope for. We find ourselves laughing at her strenuous efforts to get a real rise out of her parents and her sister, and laughing, too, at how unruffled they are by her provocations. In Leigh's world, the ordinary and the bizarre often live under one roof, and not as uncomfortably as one might imagine: there's a comic wisdom in the way this family accommodates the alien presence of an inexplicably unhappy child. Whatever Wendy and Andy may have expected of a daughter, Nicola certainly isn't it; they don't spend a lot of time fretting about what went wrong, though—they're well past that point. In a sense, "Life Is Sweet" is a naturalistic examination of one of the primary sources of British humor: the insouciance with which people accept the incongruous, and proceed as if nothing unusual were going on. And Leigh's muddling-through characters are easy for us to identify with, because, as we feel our way into the movie, we, too, are sorting out jumbled impressions—measuring this leisurely, almost haphazard experience against our expectations of proper dramatic form—and at a certain point we can feel ourselves giving in to the erratic flow of events, and taking things as they come.

Leigh's unconventional storytelling gives his movies a strange kind of suspense. Every scene and every new character seems to give rise to a fresh set of narrative possibilities, and there's no way to predict which of them will be elaborated upon and which will remain, to the end, suggestive diversions. When, about half an hour into the picture, an oddball family friend named Aubrey (Timothy Spall) comes visiting and joins the ensemble, we have no idea what to make of him. He's an outlandish caricature: a pudgy, balding lonely guy who dresses and speaks as if he were the coolest of young bachelors. (His averted-gaze manner suggests, however, that this act isn't entirely convincing even to him.) Aubrey is immediately and explosively funny; he seems to have come out of nowhere, and we have every reason to believe that after a brief scene or two this broadly conceived character will drop out of sight. Instead, Aubrey dominates the movie for long stretches. He's preparing to open a small restaurant, called The Regret Rien, which will embody his highly original idea of upscale, trendy cuisine. The menu promises exotic delights for the jaded yuppie palate: tripe soufflé; black-pudding-and-Camembert soup; pork cyst; liver in lager; tongues in a rhubarb hollandaise sauce. This absurdly wrongheaded enterprise provides op-



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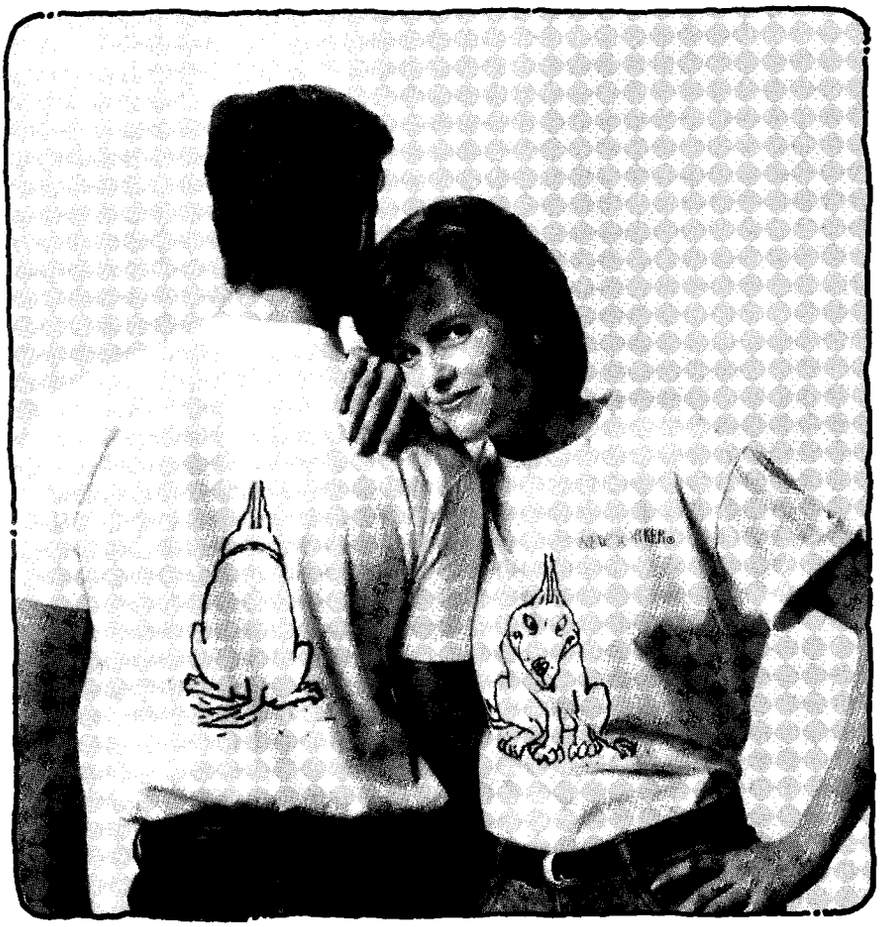

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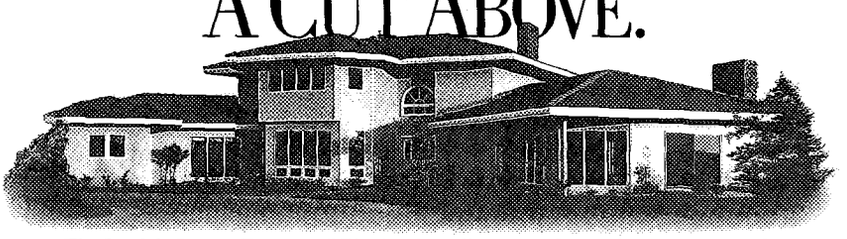

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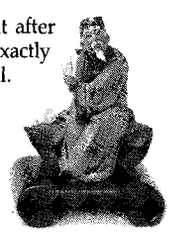

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portunities for extended sequences of wild slapstick; Leigh isn't timid about juxtaposing radically different tones. Although the Aubrey sequences should probably have been trimmed by a few minutes, there are some big laughs in them, and they have the effect of keeping the audience off balance: we're never able to settle into a single mood, to allow ourselves the comfort of knowing what sort of reaction will be demanded of us next.

Leigh doesn't manipulate our responses; he roughs them up a little, though. By means of a dense texture of tiny behavioral details and disconcerting shifts of style, he attempts to reshuffle our emotions. He prepares us to accept the moments of piercing, almost miraculous clarity that arise, as if by happy accident, at the end of his best films. These moments are modest, unspectacular: if we were primed for a grand dramatic climax, we would be disappointed. "Life Is Sweet" ambles along for nearly an hour and a half without seeming especially concerned about where it's headed, and then, long after we've given up trying to figure out what the whole thing is supposed to mean, Leigh comes up with a stunning scene in which Wendy and Nicola discuss Nicola's dissatisfaction with life. This isn't a conversation that either of them has appeared to be building up to, or perhaps ever expected to have, but as it progresses we sense how this moment of mutual unguarded honesty has emerged from the apparent chaos of the women's recent experiences. And we realize, too, that Mike Leigh's unusual filmmaking process is designed to generate scenes like this, to bring forth acting that is as pure and direct as Alison Steadman's and Jane Horrocks'. Leigh's conception of dramatic structure has nothing to do with resolving elaborate plots, or teasing out shattering revelations of dark secrets, or engineering life-changing confrontations. What he's searching for in his movies is the possibility of seeing the world through someone else's eyes—someone specific, whose life can be shared only through patient observation of its random and stubbornly idiosyncratic details. His art consists of making such moments of sudden, profound understanding seem worth any amount of pain, muddle, and slapstick catastrophe.

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AROUND CITY HALL

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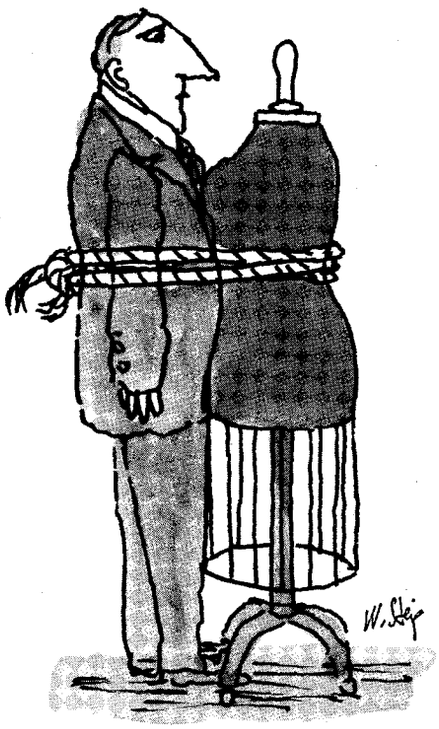
"IN a two-day period in New York city recently, a homeless man, a train maintenance worker, and a dog were killed on the subway tracks. Ninety people telephoned the Transit Authority to express concern about the dog, but only three called about the worker and no one about the homeless man," the syndicated column "News of the Weird" reported last May in a dispatch that appeared under the headline "NEW YORKERS LOVE A SQUASHED DOG." The story of the animal's sad end on the IND tracks was widely published around the country; in the Washington *Post*, the headline was "N.Y. SUBWAY TRAIN HITS DOG." The likelihood that a dog run over by, say, a Denver bus would receive similar headlined coverage seems small. One of the handicaps of this city is that not only are local disaster stories—racial killings, municipal scandals, sex crimes among the rich and celebrated—frequent and sometimes grisly but editors around the country so gleefully make room for bad news with a New York dateline that when the city is strapped for funds, as it is now, and seeks financial help from federal agencies or from Congress, to which, given its residents' large contributions to the federal treasury, it is rightfully entitled (or so Mayor David Dinkins says almost daily), the out-of-town impression may be that New York is such a weird and chaotic place as to be virtually past saving: a severe political disability.

On occasion, schadenfreudian editorial writers in the Great Out There may elevate bad news from this city into near-apocalyptic significance. A late-August subway crash, just north of the Union Square station, in which five people died moved the Washington *Post* to deplore "the kind of decay and degradation that is eating away at the centers of the great American cities of the Northeast," and the *Post* went on to say, "The subway crash in Manhattan has had an extraordinary impact . . . because it speaks with uncomfortable clarity of urban decline and a slide toward ludicrous standards of public services in the country's greatest center of wealth." A few days before the accident, riots had broken out in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn after a seven-year-old black boy, Gavin Cato, was killed by a car driven by a Hasidic Jew of the Lubavitcher sect; the car had been part of the entourage, led by a New York Police Department escort, of the Lubavitcher Grand Rebbe (who many Lubavitchers believe will soon reveal himself to be the Messiah). The riots had also offered evidence—at least to some alarmists—that maintaining civilization in the country's greatest center of wealth might be increasingly a losing proposition. Things have been relatively quiet in Crown Heights lately, but various consequences of the so-called days of rage—one of the most recent was the forced resignation of Dr. Emilio Carillo, whom Dinkins appointed last year as head of the Health and Hospitals Corporation—continue to make news here.

Some New Yorkers adjust better to being called names (even "squashed-dog lovers") than to the sense that this city, which local boosters keep insisting is the capital of finance, communications, the arts, sports—of practically everything—has of late been relegated ignominiously to the sidelines of major national events. Each April, hope springing eternal, baseball fans here trade predictions that in the new baseball season there will finally, once again, be a subway series—a happier association with the city's underground transportation system than some others. Unfortunately, the last such series (between the New York Yankees and the Brooklyn Dodgers) was in 1956, long before the Minnesota Twins and the Atlanta Braves, this year's finalists, existed. The former Mighty Yankees and the once Miracle Mets ended this season twenty and twenty and a half games, respectively, out of first place in their divisions.



The self feels trapped in a relationship.

No one thought to embrace a solution for the lagging teams which had once been proposed by the late Rabbi Meier Kahane for the Mets in a bad season. In the late nineteen-sixties, Kahane, a native of Brooklyn, had established the militant Jewish Defense League, with its slogan "Never again!"—referring, of course, to the Holocaust. Kahane was assassinated here last year (another bloody headline from New York), and his alleged murderer, El Sayyid a Nosair, is about to go on trial in Manhattan Supreme Court. His influence is maintained in this city, however, by remnants of the J.D.L. and by members of the Kahane Chai, whose name, its founder, Kahane's twenty-five-year-old son, Binyamin, has explained, means "Kahane Lives!" The Kahane Chai was represented in the angry crowd in Crown Heights on the night last August when Dinkins, standing in a doorway with the father of Gavin Cato, was the target of bottles and rocks hurled mostly by young blacks, until the police hustled him off for his own safety. There was some rock throwing by young Hasidim, too, although no members of the Kahane Chai were seen throwing anything at the Mayor. They shouted imprecations against the Reverend Al Sharpton, who was widely identified as the leader of the angry blacks, and they demanded punishment for the killers of Yankel Rosenbaum, a rabbinical student who, three hours after the accident, was set upon and stabbed—the wounds eventually proved fatal—by a band of young blacks. (One of them has since been indicted.) The only apparent reason for the attack on him

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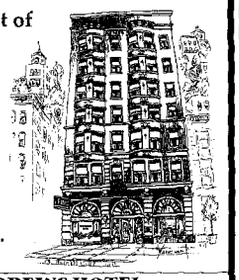

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was that he wore the Hasidim's traditional long black coat, felt hat, and corkscrew sidecurls.

Brooklyn has by far the largest Arab-American population of any of the local boroughs—perhaps a hundred and fifty thousand. Fortunately, most of the Arabs there live some miles west of Crown Heights, near Atlantic Avenue. In any case, young Kahane and his friends are hardly intent on pursuing the goal of expelling all the Arabs from Brooklyn, as his father had been on driving all the Arabs out of Israel. During the Mets' painful years, back in the sixties, the elder Kahane's goal had been very different. He was arrested for picketing Shea Stadium, demanding that the team's lineup reflect the ethnic makeup of this city's residents. It was not believed at the time that more Jewish batters and pitchers—that is, a Jewish quota—would turn things around for the team.

THE capturing of the National League pennant on October 17th was the second big win that week for Georgia. The televised playoff game on October 13th had had the lowest rating of any playoff game in baseball history, because nearly everybody was watching the Senate Judiciary Committee hearings on the nomination of Clarence Thomas, of Pin Point, Georgia, to the Supreme Court. New York was pretty well on the sidelines of that national spectacle also—at least, officially. You can't count the fact that it was a *Newsday* reporter, Timothy Phelps, who, having got hold of a copy of Anita Hill's affidavit, made the phone call to ask if she planned to testify on the matter, or the fact that the regulars on the "McLaughlin Group," in discussing her testimony later, invoked the name of Tawana Brawley, the black upstate New York teen-ager whose story of having been raped by a band of white men was later found by a grand jury to have been a hoax. There are, of course, no New Yorkers on the Senate Judiciary Committee—though, as things turned out, having served on the committee during its hearings on the confirmation of Clarence Thomas will not be viewed in most quarters as a valuable political credential.

Except for Thurgood Marshall, the last Supreme Court Justice nominated from this state was John Harlan, named

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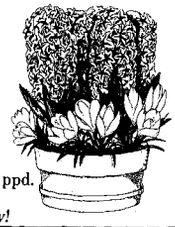

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by Eisenhower in 1954. After Clarence Thomas was nominated, some who did not think highly of the choice harked back to one by another Republican President, Herbert Hoover, in 1932. When the retirement of Oliver Wendell Holmes left a vacancy on the Court, Hoover, challenged to name a replacement strictly on merit, nominated the man whom Holmes himself had favored, Benjamin Cardozo, the chief judge of the New York State Court of Appeals, although that meant that three of the nine members of the high court would be New Yorkers (the others were Harlan Stone and Charles Evans Hughes, the Chief Justice) and two would be Jews (the other was Louis Brandeis). In this city Thomas had the backing only of the *Post* (delivered dramatically, though, in a full-page editorial under the headline "CLARENCE THOMAS: NOW MORE THAN EVER"). The *News* and *Newsday* both opposed confirmation, as did the *Times* ("A judicial giant might survive serious doubts. . . . Clarence Thomas is no such giant"). Of the six senators in the so-called tri-state area of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, Alfonse D'Amato, of New York, was the only one to vote for confirmation, but then he is the only Republican. New York's other senator, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, was one of six Democrats who had planned to support Thomas but had changed their minds after the Anita Hill testimony.

On the local scene, Dinkins had opposed Thomas from the start. Governor Mario Cuomo—whose will-he/won't-he Presidential candidacy (about which he might end speculation one way or the other at any moment) has been the only significant national news out of New York lately—said at a press conference on October 8th that the Court with Thomas on it would be "a horror," and that the only way out was "to elect a Democratic President." This statement was quickly followed by the familiar Cuomo equivalent of "Why are you looking at *me*? Did I say anything about running for President?" This year's lampoon by members of the Legislative Correspondents Association in Albany mocked his devious approach to the big subject with such lines as "Yes, I might have mentioned *house*. I might even have said *white*. But did I ever say *White House*?" No matter who runs for the White House, this city will continue to have some influence, since it is the place where politicians from all over the country—and not only Democrats—most often come for money to get reëlected with. There are some signs already that this influence could result in relative impoverishment for United States senators who have previously received generous contributions here because of their promises of support for causes close to the contributors' hearts—but then voted for Thomas. Money from local sources—particularly from women—is said to be going elsewhere in large amounts. David Garth, the political consultant, once said, "In the world of political fund-raising, New York is Mecca"—a reference that, unlike nearly everything else that has been said in this city and elsewhere lately, was not taken as having racial or religious (or, for that matter, gender) connotations.

THOUGH the Crown Heights riots caused more than enough distress here, even greater national attention would doubtless have been paid last August to this additional example of the shame of the city if the three days when the riots were at their height hadn't coincided almost exactly with those of a far more historic event. Frequent variations on the headline "THREE DAYS THAT SHOOK THE WORLD" referred, of course, to the Soviet coup, which lasted from August 19th to the 22nd. *Time* and *Newsweek* did not carry a word the following week about the violence in Brooklyn, although they made up for it later. So did *The New Republic*, which devoted much of its October 14th issue to a cover article, "HATE STORY," that had sections entitled "The Lynching of Yankel Rosenbaum" and "The Meltdown of the Melting Pot." The ugliest kind of news from New York seems to be especially welcome in the offices of *The New Republic*, which are in Washington, although someone there might have raised the question of how this city could still have enough life in it to be the site of such vigorous conflict, in view of a 1988 story about New York in an issue whose cover said, in large letters, "NYC, RIP." One out-of-town paper did get right on the Crown Heights case, however—the Phoenix-based *Arizona Republic*, whose publisher and president, Eugene Pulliam, is an uncle of Vice-President

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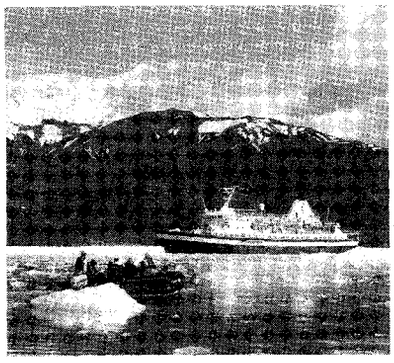

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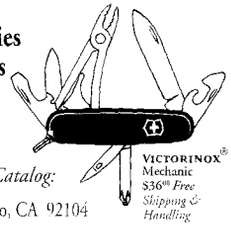

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Quayle. In its Sunday edition after the riots, it did not waste its main editorial on commentary about a climactic three days in world history but dwelt on the latest from Brooklyn. In paragraph after paragraph, it conveyed the details of what had happened to Gavin Cato and Yankel Rosenbaum, and of the riots, which it described as "a gruesome reenactment of Kristallnacht, 1938," in Nazi Germany. It also dwelt in detail on the events here that it saw as having led up to Crown Heights: the murders in Howard Beach and Bensonhurst, and the rape of the jogger in Central Park, each of which had involved interracial violence. The Reverend Al Sharpton was dealt with unfavorably, and so was Leonard Jeffries, the City College professor who is given to what have been widely denounced as anti-Semitic statements. It was hard to imagine New York papers, even with their extensive sources, being in a position to refer with such easy familiarity to events in other cities—say, Phoenix.

Also heightening the impression that things tend to be worse here than everywhere else is a habit some New Yorkers have of speaking at the top of their lungs. Through language, a local happening such as a murder, or the accidental death of a child, will be elevated into an event carrying immense historical (and political) meaning. New York is not the only place where this happens, of course. Yankel Rosenbaum's death at the hands of a mob apparently bent on racial revenge was far more appropriately referred to as a lynching (by Mayor Dinkins, among others) than was Clarence Thomas's description of what he himself was undergoing when, unlike other victims of lynching, he was alive and sitting in the presence of those against whom he made the charge. (Actually, this terrible imagery appears to have been first used by Thomas's so-called mentor, Senator Danforth, who said of Thomas's opponents, three days before his testimony, "Their American way is the way of lynching.") The civil-rights activist Roger Wilkins said, before the Senate vote, that he had been "deeply, deeply offended" by Thomas's reference to the interrogation as a lynching, and thought that other blacks would feel the same way—but perhaps not. In frequent use in this city, possibly more than in any other, is another word that is heavily freighted

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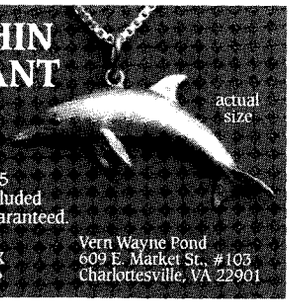

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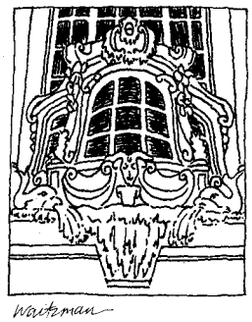
with history and emotion: "Holocaust." A few black leaders, intent on proving that Gavin Cato had died not in an accident but as the result of a Jewish conspiracy, resorted to the word "lynching" to describe what had happened to him. Among some of the Hasidic Jews in Crown Heights during the disturbances there, however, the word "Holocaust" was used in almost every sentence, along with the cry of "Never again!" The Jewish papers routinely referred to the violence there as a pogrom. A Jewish survivor of Kristallnacht, however, wrote a letter to the *Times* saying that what had happened in Crown Heights bore little resemblance to the carnage and destruction that took place in Germany fifty-three years ago. Others noted that most of the property damaged in the three nights of rioting had been owned by blacks. The references to a pogrom nevertheless kept coming. Some of the angrier black leaders have begun to speak, perhaps in self-defense, of "the Black Holocaust," or sometimes "the African Holocaust"—that is, slavery—which they portray, often at the top of their lungs ("YA ME? YA YOU!" was the headline over a front-page editorial on Crown Heights in Brooklyn's black-owned weekly, the *City Sun*), as a conspiracy by white people, and particularly by "rich Jews," as Professor Jeffries argues, to destroy blacks. Two and a half months after the Crown Heights riots, no one can say when the noise will stop.



WHEN New Yorkers are wrought up about some event or issue, they tend to march, which may have something to do with the fact that this place has the highest ratio of pedestrians to motorists of any large American city. Blacks, led by the Reverend Al Sharpton, marched on the Brooklyn District Attorney's summer home, in Breezy Point, Queens, after a multiracial grand jury declined to indict Yosef Lifsh, the driver of the car that killed Gavin Cato. Hasidic leaders, joined by Senator D'Amato, marched on Gracie Mansion to protest what they saw as Dinkins' insufficiently forceful handling of the black rioters. Members of the Kahane Chai marched on Professor Jeffries' home, in Teaneck, New Jersey. Every few weekends since the rioting in Crown Heights ended, there has been a march there, led not by Sharpton but by unaffiliated New Yorkers, mostly from other boroughs, come to urge that black and Jewish residents of that neighborhood reach unity—or, at least, some degree of amity.

To many such marchers, Crown Heights had previously been only a place-name on a map of Brooklyn, much of which was a big mystery to them to start with. New Yorkers who have tried to keep up with what happened there have had to put together their own unauthorized Baedeker about it. Many New Yorkers did not understand before last August that there are about a million Caribbean—sometimes referred to as West Indian—blacks in the city, three-quarters of whom live in Brooklyn. The West Indians may outnumber American-born blacks here, but the latter still dominate the black political machinery. In a recent television interview, Cuomo mentioned a fact that he said had not been widely noticed—that many of the Caribbean blacks, most of whom arrived here in the last three decades, are not welfare candidates but, rather, are well educated, and constitute what he called "a ready-made middle class": the kind of new arrivals (three hundred thousand people, most of them immigrants, were added to New York's population in the nineteen-eighties) who he is convinced will bring the city through its present malaise. Another piece of enlightenment that became available about the local equivalent of a foreign enclave involved hair. In some Crown Heights areas, streets are crowded with both Hasidic men wearing sidecurls, or *pais*, and West Indian blacks in dreadlocks. One Trinidadian immigrant, who runs a jerk-chicken counter, explained to the *News* that the two hair styles represented a religious tradition that was prescribed by the same passage of the Old Testament. "We are the real Jews," he said. "We are the Israelites. . . . It's in the Bible, mon."

The theory that the violence in Crown Heights after the first night was based on hatred between blacks

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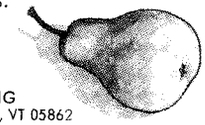

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and Jews is disputed by many, including the columnist Jimmy Breslin, who is in a position to bear direct witness. On the night of August 21st, when Dinkins first visited the scene, Breslin took a cab there from Manhattan. Not far from the center of things, a group of teen-age blacks stopped the cab, smashed its windshield with a baseball bat, then dragged him out and stripped him of all his clothes except his underwear, and of all his money. What was on their minds, he maintains, was money. As far as race was concerned ("Am I Jewish?" he asked), they kept yelling "White man! White man!" He has pointed out that the cabdriver, who was black, was robbed, and also beaten, by the teen-agers. "They were so desperate that they didn't have the subway fare to go over to Manhattan where the money is, and rob there." (In keeping with the out-of-town demand for bad news about this city, the story plays well on the book-pushing circuit, which he has been travelling to promote his new book, "Damon Runyon: A Life.") He was saved from being beaten bloody with the baseball bat by someone who had seen him in a television beer commercial. (His decision to make the commercial was called selling out by some of his literary friends, he noted, but in the long run it proved a fortunate move.)

The events in Crown Heights had one noticeable effect on Mayor Dinkins. He frequently quotes Martin Luther King in his speeches. During the riots, many of the young blacks wore Malcolm X T-shirts, and several announced, for the benefit of the television cameras, "If Malcolm had been here, he'd have been right in there with us." One said of Martin Luther King that he "was O.K. for his time, but this time is now." For his most recent visit to the Crown Heights scene, Dinkins made a sartorial change. To go with his familiar warmup jacket, he wore not a Mets or a Yankees baseball cap but one sporting a big "X," contributed by his friend Spike Lee, who, in another part of Brooklyn, is making the film version of Malcolm X's life.

THE Crown Heights troubles continue to have an effect on politics here. In 1986, when D'Amato was a candidate for reëlection, he was eager for support from all voters, including

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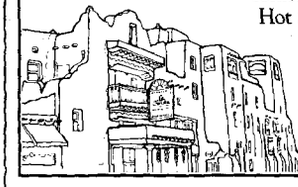

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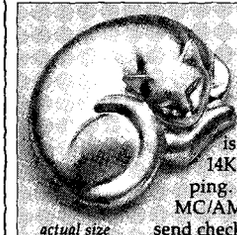

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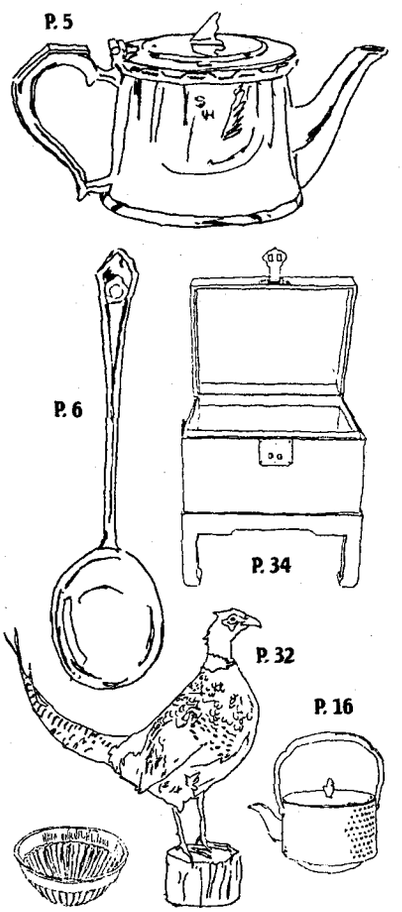

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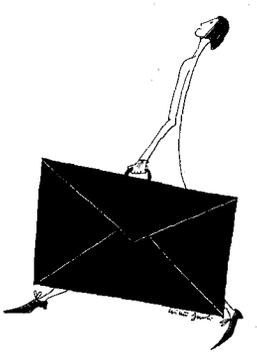
blacks. His 1992 campaign is now clearly under way, and it is evident that this time he has written off the blacks. He denounced Dinkins as a coward for failing, in his view, to denounce Al Sharpton strongly enough in Crown Heights, and he called Sharpton "a racial racketeer." Last month, during a pilgrimage D'Amato made to see the Grand Rebbe, he elevated the position of the Hasidim in Crown Heights to that of the Jews in Israel. Both, he said, were "targets of terrorists and interlopers." It was assumed that the Crown Heights interloper he was referring to was Sharpton—who, in fact, lives in New Jersey. Sharpton has said that in 1986 the Senator "wasn't condemning me when he came to my office" and "like a junkie needing a fix...begged me like a dog" for his endorsement. D'Amato burned his bridges to the black community further when, speaking of Dinkins' determination to lead a delegation to South Africa this month, he said that the city might be better off if the Mayor took a long sabbatical, or even stayed there.



Though Dinkins could ignore some of the noise from the two big-mouth Als, as they have been referred to, a far more serious problem for the Mayor resulting from the events in Crown Heights was the revelation, after the body of Yankel Rosenbaum was flown back to his native Australia, that the young rabbinical student might not have had to die from the stab wounds inflicted in the riots. Evidence at Kings County Hospital Center, part of the city's Health and Hospitals Corporation, where he was treated, revealed that he had bled to death an hour after the Mayor visited him, because the emergency-room staff had failed to notice that he had not one but two stab wounds, though the ambulance technicians had pointed this out. In the weeks that followed, several other patients died under questionable conditions in municipal hospitals, one of them being an old friend of Dinkins—a legendary figure in Harlem politics, William Chance. Most accounts of these fatalities began with references to the apparently avoidable death of Yankel Rosenbaum. (A special problem for the Mayor was that one of the first calls for an investigation of Rosenbaum's death came from Andrew Stein, the president of the City Council, who is considered far and away the most likely Dinkins opponent in the 1993 mayoral race.) By the middle of last month, there were loud cries all over town—except in some Latino communities—for the removal of Dr. Emilio Carillo, the head of the H.H.C. Other investigations of Carillo, already under way, involved questionable loans. The major element that had delayed any action by the Mayor on Carillo was that, since he is one of the highest-ranking Hispanics in city government, the case for not removing him was being pushed by many Latino leaders, whose support the Mayor will need badly in 1993. Finally, on October 21st, it was announced that Carillo had resigned two days earlier. In an odd arrangement for a city famously short of funds, he was being allowed to stay on, at his hundred-and-twenty-nine-thousand-dollar-a-year salary, until next March, while a "nationwide search" for a successor as head of the H.H.C., which has a nearly three-billion-dollar annual budget, was conducted. In a demonstration of how large a role ethnic politics plays in this city's government, a member of the search committee said of one promising candidate, "He's perfect. He's a black Hispanic."

One of the parties the Mayor attended recently, despite all his troubles, was a roast of the comedian Richard Pryor, held by the Friars Club at the New York Hilton. In referring to the four-letter words that are customary at such events, Dinkins, celebrated for his gentlemanly ways, indicated that certain events had got to him. "Normally, I don't use blue language or four-letter words," he said. "The only vulgar word I can think of offhand has six letters." And he spelled it out: "D-a-m-a-t-o." Pryor said he'd never been in a room with so many white people "that didn't want to hurt me." Robin Williams, as master of ceremonies, made it clear that what had been happening in this city recently had not escaped Hollywood's attention, saying, in his opening remarks, "It's so wonderful to see this many Jews and this many blacks in one room—without Al Sharpton."

—Andy Logan

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BOOKS

From Here to Eternity

"HARLOT'S GHOST" (Random House; $30), Norman Mailer's new novel, is a spy story about a top C.I.A. official—the Harlot of the title—who either defects to the Soviet Union or is assassinated by C.I.A. operatives whose illegal activities he has been secretly investigating. It is also a bildungsroman about a young C.I.A. agent named Harry Hubbard, who is Harlot's godson and protégé, and who comes of age in a series of adventures set on the front lines of the Cold War—in Berlin, in Latin America, in Florida just before the Bay of Pigs, and in Washington during the Cuban missile crisis. It is also an experiment in "faction," in which historical figures (John F. Kennedy, Allen Dulles, E. Howard Hunt) walk the same ground as Mailer's own creations, and in which real documents and events mix with imaginary ones. It is also an archival history of the C.I.A.; an epic synthesis of some of the author's well-known obsessions, from the metaphysics of sexual behavior to the death of Marilyn Monroe; a psychological study, introducing a new theory of personality; an essay on the nature of good and evil; an investigative report on America's secret government; a novel of manners about the American Wasp; and a love story.

If Mailer had chosen to pursue any one of these projects, he might have produced a good novel. If he had fused two or three together, he might have produced a great novel. But he has tried to accomplish all of them at once, and has entered himself in a literary decathlon so demanding that, despite his book's proportions (it is thirteen hundred and ten pages long), he is unable to finish a single event. He refuses to give up, however, until he's flat on his back—so that "Harlot's Ghost" is not only the most unsatisfying book Mailer has ever written, it is also the most undistinguished.

It is not as though Mailer's career were a sequence of fully realized achievements. Mailer hates failure, of course, and he takes personally every wound to his reputation that failure inflicts. His essentially autobiographical compendiums—"Advertisements for Myself," "Cannibals and Christians," "Existential Errands," "Pieces and Pontifications"—are filled with barbed tales about the many editors, critics, talk-show hosts, and fellow-writers who, in his view, have at one time or another done him wrong. But he is not afraid of failure, and that literary daring is what has made him so engagingly unpredictable. He is as promiscuous as Alice: if the label says "Eat Me," he'll try it. After the precociously assured naturalism of "The Naked and the Dead," he wrote "Barbary Shore," a quasi-allegorical, quasi-surrealist muddle. After the cranky "Prisoner of Sex" and the crass "Marilyn," he produced a masterpiece of controlled narrative, "The Executioner's Song." And then, apparently at the top of his form, he gave us "Of Women and Their Elegance."

The possibility of disaster on a grand scale is not the least compelling of the associations that can attach themselves to a writer's reputation, and the opening pages of "Harlot's Ghost" hold the interest the opening pages of Mailer's books usually do: you find yourself caught up in trying to decide whether this one is headed toward tour de force or farce. The story begins on a stormy Maine night in 1983. Harry, the career C.I.A. man, now in middle age, is driving from the home of his mistress, a waitress named Chloe, to the home of his wife, a patrician beauty and occasional C.I.A. psychologist named Kittredge. It's a long drive, and Harry occupies himself with musings on the dangers of driving with a bad conscience ("The finest liar in the land must be the ice monarch who sat in dominion on the curve of the road"), on the inner nature of his work ("In Intelligence, we look to discover the compartmentalization of the heart"), and on the bedroom talents of his mistress ("Her groove was a marrow of good grease") and his wife ("Kittredge, indeed, was as fierce as one of those wood-animals with claws and sharp teeth and fine fur that you can never quite tame. At its worst, there

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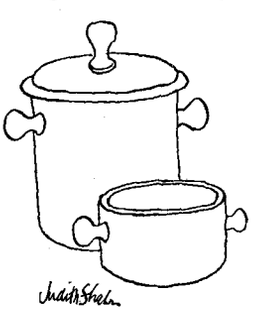
were times when I felt like a tomcat in with a raccoon").

At this point, some readers may be guessing farce, but things pick up. Harry and Kittredge live, it seems, on a tiny island off Mount Desert in a house they call the Keep, which has an unusual history and a ghost in its cellar. To reach the house on this night, Harry must cross a raging inlet in a little rowboat; when he arrives, he finds Kittredge locked in their bedroom and the house surrounded by unknown lookouts. The lookouts turn out to work for the C.I.A., too. One of them informs Harry of the apparent death of Harlot, who is Harry's mentor and (as we have learned) Kittredge's first husband, and who is thought to have been investigating corruption in the agency: a body resembling Harlot's has washed up on a mud flat in Chesapeake Bay, but the corpse's identity cannot be established with certainty. Harry also learns that since his departure from Chloe's, earlier in the evening, her home has been ransacked by unknown parties, and that a rogue C.I.A. agent named Dix is expected to arrive at the Keep that night (which explains the stakeout). When Harry finally confronts Kittredge, she tells him that she has fallen in love with Dix, and she asks Harry to leave, which he does immediately. Later that night, the Keep burns to the ground, and Kittredge and Dix disappear.

These first hundred pages, as gothic and occasionally overwrought as they are, at least create some drama and introduce us to a series of mysteries. But the mysteries are never solved. In the more than twelve hundred pages that follow, we never learn whether Harlot is really dead, what crimes, if any, he has been investigating, who ransacked Chloe's house, why the Keep burned down, how Kittredge fell in love with Dix, or where the two of them have gone. The opening section of "Harlot's Ghost" turns out to be the overture to the wrong opera.



For the rest of the novel is a long flashback—Harry's memoir of his education, at an exclusive prep school called St. Matthew's and at Yale, and of his adventures as a novice and then a middle-level functionary in the C.I.A. The dramatic purpose of this memoir is apparently to bring us back to the stormy night in 1983 when Harry's wife runs off and his house burns down, but we make it only as far as 1965. (Evidently, a sequel—more accurately, the rest of the story—can be expected, since the novel ends with the line "To be continued.")

The memoir begins with a promise of intensity. There are some vivid stories about the young Harry rock-climbing with his godfather, Harlot (his real name is Hugh Tremont Montague; Harlot is a code name he has chosen for himself), and about Harry's experiences at school, at college, and in a C.I.A. training program. His first important assignment takes him to Berlin. The year is 1956; the Wall has not yet been built, but the Americans have tunnelled into the Soviet sector and tapped the phone lines to Moscow. Harry becomes an aide to William Harvey, the C.I.A. man running the tunnel operation, and is drawn into a series of situations involving double agents, a sex club, a former Nazi general, and run-ins with Harvey, who is something of a loose cannon and, it seems, an ancient antagonist of Harlot's.

Harvey is a real historical figure (and his tunnel was a real tunnel). Transformed into a fictional character, he is a large creation—a clownish vulgarian who is also shrewd and sinister. But the Berlin episode itself is slackly constructed, and strewn with half a dozen story elements that never compose themselves into a full-fledged plot. Intrigue builds and then is allowed to dissipate. Serious troubles arise between Harry and Harvey, for instance, and then are taken care of—we're not told exactly how—after an entirely too deus-ex-machina appearance in Berlin by Harlot.

The air of inconsequentiality that begins to descend upon the novel at this point—the feeling that characters and events are simply being passed before us, and will not have any particular bearing on what is to come—would matter less if the pages held some other kind of interest. But even the atmospherics are inferior. To use a fair point of comparison, Ian McEwan's most recent novel, "The Innocent," which is also about Harvey's

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tunnel, and which also uses postwar Berlin as a backdrop for a story of youthful initiation, is far more fully imagined. McEwan was only trying to do one thing, though, and Mailer is trying to do ten.

Harry's next tour of duty takes him to Uruguay, and he spends three years there working for E. Howard Hunt, who was, in fact, once the Montevideo station chief. Here Harry cultivates a few agents, runs some dirty-tricks operations against the local K.G.B., has an affair with the wife of a colleague ("Sex with Sally was a football mêlée with bites and bruises and chocolate squashed in your crotch"), and becomes involved with several exotic Latinos. (Uruguay might seem an out-of-the-way setting for a Cold War epic, but Philip Agee, whose "Inside the Company: CIA Diary" is one of the acknowledged sources for "Harlot's Ghost," spent a couple of years in Montevideo, and his book, published in 1975, includes day-by-day accounts of his activities there in the mid-sixties. Mailer has borrowed, in fact, a story about a love triangle in the Soviet embassy in Montevideo from Agee's book.)

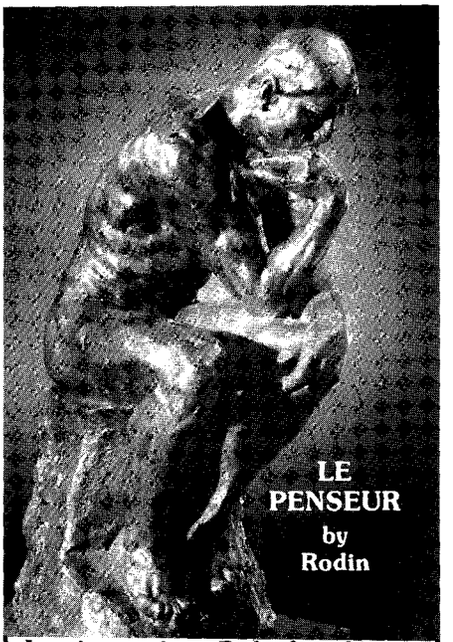
Most of Harry's Uruguayan adventures are told in the form of letters he writes to Kittredge, who, though she is married to Harlot and is living in Washington, is half in love with Harry (who is wholly in love with her). Dramatically, this shift to an epistolary mode is expensive: letters, even the improbably exhaustive letters Harry so industriously produces, distance action. They are, in effect, a memoir within what is already a memoir, and they drain the story of immediacy.

But immediacy must be sacrificed, because other projects press themselves on the author's attention. Kittredge, who works as a psychologist for the C.I.A., asks Harry to include in his letters detailed reports on his most mundane activities in Montevideo, because, she explains, they will "bring light and shadow to the dreamlike two-dimensionality on which my feeble work is projected." This may be a hint that Kittredge is milking her innocent admirer for company secrets. (There's no firm evidence in "Harlot's Ghost" that she's a double agent, but, with perhaps a thousand pages more to come, who knows?) More likely, though, her request is simply an excuse for Mailer to present us with what he's learned in his research on the way the C.I.A. used to do business in Latin America without first going to the trouble of digesting it.

And the letters are burdened with yet another mission, which is to move the story of the love triangle of Harlot, Harry, and Kittredge forward: there is a lot of chatter in the letters from Kittredge about her feelings for Harlot, and in the letters from Harry about his feelings for Kittredge. Mailer's problem, in short, is that he has not found a way to run his spy story, his C.I.A. docudrama, and his love story off the same plot—he hasn't been able to invent a dramatic situation that will permit him to fulfill all his ambitions at once. So he has to pull and push at his form. The romance gets the worst of it: this must be the most disembodied fictional love affair outside "Clarissa." Harry and Kittredge almost never see each other, and when, much later in the novel, she finally declares her love for him she does so by mail.

Harry's Montevideo assignment is followed by a stint in southern Florida, where he works for Hunt again, this time preparing for the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion. He also gets involved, at Harlot's request, with a woman called Modene Murphy. Modene (as Mailer explains in an author's note) is modelled on Judith Campbell Exner, a woman who claimed, in a book called "My Story" and published in 1977, to have been a lover of Frank Sinatra's and, later, to have carried on simultaneous affairs with Sam Giancana, the Mafia don, and with President Kennedy. Harry is supposed to determine, for Harlot, whether Giancana is using Modene to blackmail Kennedy; but Harry himself falls in love with Modene, and they have an affair of their own.

In this section, the letters to Kittredge are temporarily abandoned. The narrative is carried forward instead partly by cables and other "secure communications" between Harry and Harlot and between Harry and his father, Cal Hubbard (also a C.I.A. man, who here has the job of overseeing the covert war against Castro), and partly by transcripts of long telephone conversa-



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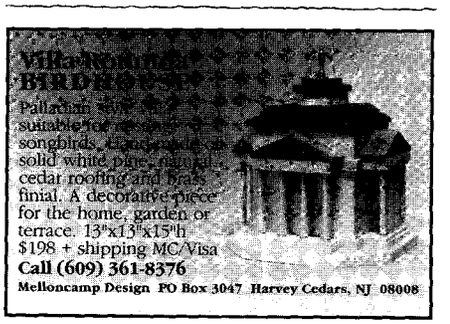

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tions—the fruits of F.B.I. wiretaps—between Modene and a girlfriend, most of which are taken up with gossip about the sexual tastes and techniques of Frank, Jack, and Sam.

By the time the Bay of Pigs rolls around, the book's narrative energy is almost exhausted. The invasion itself is presented in the form of a diary Harry writes surreptitiously while sitting around at C.I.A. headquarters in Washington listening to reports of the action in Cuba. The diary, even more obviously than the letters, serves Mailer as a narrative clothesline on which he can hang historical events. ("A Soviet spaceman named Yuri Gagarin orbited the earth in a spaceship," Harry writes dutifully, apparently concerned that the fact might be forgotten if he fails to jot it down.) When the invasion takes place, only Harry's vague imaginings of what is going on ("I feel the dirty, intimate stickiness of blood") distinguish the telling from repotted journalism.

It is as though the novelist had finally realized something that has been evident to his readers for a long time, which is that he will never reach the finish line; after the Bay of Pigs the book begins to skim along from incident to incident, looking for any excuse to take a shortcut through the material. Kittredge is Mailer's witness to the Cuban missile crisis, for instance; we have her report, naturally, in the form of letters to Harry. She apologizes for the rather desultory account she is able to offer—not because she has had limited access to White House decision-making (plausible though that excuse would be) but because "I feel tedium descend on me at the thought of reconstructing all the fine moves." She warns Harry, "I expect you will be disappointed, but I am going to offer no more than a quick tour of the negotiations." Most readers would not have been disappointed if she had offered no tour at all, since she has nothing to say that is not available in a dozen books on the subject. The book winds down with an episode in which Harry and his father do business with a man plotting to assassinate Castro, and closes with a last encounter between Harry and his old boss Bill Harvey, who is now stationed in Rome.

Toward the end, the prose, well crafted and sometimes pungent early in the book, is running on empty. Harry's meditations have become echo chambers of nonsense:

> One should not spend one's life in the halls of a great profession without descending at least once to the cellar chambers—a metaphor, but then I was consuming metaphors on this night the way others in the same brew of anxiety might chew on facts; death was but a metaphor for metaphor, even as the square root of minus one was the mandrake root to guide us into that other world where there might be no roots.

Mailer's pet rhetorical tricks (here, for example, litotes, the naming of a quality by the negation of its opposite) begin to swamp whole paragraphs:

> "I would have expected no less," I told him, and went below again, thinking no good thoughts about Butler, since he had now given me to understand that sleep before combat was no virtue, but an overindulgence. If Butler's character was not splendid, his adrenaline was nonetheless superb.

And the desire to purchase intensity as cheaply as possible produces mixed-metaphorical bathos, as in "Luminous as the light of still water was the steel-tipped manifest of his eyes."

OF Mailer's many ambitions in "Harlot's Ghost," three seem to matter to him most. The first is the depiction of the ethnic type that Harry, Harlot, and Kittredge represent—the Eastern-establishment blue bloods who were prominent in the O.S.S., the wartime intelligence agency that became the C.I.A. The Keep, Harry and Kittredge's house in Maine, is a marvellous invention for this purpose: it allows Mailer to suggest something of the genealogical self-consciousness and emotional repression (that ghost in the cellar) of this variety of Wasp. A cameo by Kittredge's parents—a retired Harvard professor, who reads bloody speeches from Shakespeare aloud after dinner, and his slightly mad wife, who cannot stop talking about her zinnias—is expertly rendered (and it's short, too).

Mailer wants to use his idea of Waspishness, though, to explain something about Cold War ideology. The religious training of the upper-crust Wasp, he thinks, is what made the Cold War possible: their Manichaean obsessions required the fiction of an evil empire. So he makes Harlot, for instance, begin his career as a teacher at an Episcopal boarding school, and gives him speeches in which he says such things as "Communism is the entropy of Christ" and "There is no

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free will for man unless the Devil's powers were made equal on this embattled planet to the Lord's." It all seems improbable. Episcopalianism is much too genteel a manner of observance to produce that kind of sermonizing: Harlot on the supernatural sounds like a cross between Jerry Falwell and John Calvin. The eschatological fevers of the Cold War did not originate on the playing fields of Groton. When Harry, who is subjected to a dose of Mailer's fire-and-brimstone Episcopalianism himself at Harlot's old prep school, actually enters the C.I.A., he finds himself, quite convincingly, in the company of men whose blood is much less blue, and whose anti-Communism is much less of a High Church affair. And at this point, Mailer essentially drops the notion that the C.I.A. is the institutional embodiment of highborn Wasp culture, and the theme is eventually lost in the general cacophony.

Harlot's Manichaeanism finds an echo in a psychological theory that Kittredge is working on throughout the novel—and, indeed, seems never to stop talking about. This theory is the second of Mailer's larger preoccupations in the book. Kittredge's insight is that every personality is subdivided into "two complete and different persons." These she terms Alpha, which is the "creature of the forward-swimming energies of sperm, ambitious, blind to all but its own purpose. . .oriented toward enterprise," and Omega, which "originated in the ovum and so knows more about the mysteries—conception, birth, death, night, the moon, eternity, karma," and so on. Mailer's surprisingly New Age idea seems to be that we must all get in touch with our Omegas or else suffer the consequences of a divided personality. How this theory tops Freud's, as Kittredge and her creator seem to think it does, is unclear, but Mailer lets very little in his story go by—from Harry's sex life to Allen Dulles's clubfoot ("No other man stood so securely with one foot in the full glory of the sun while the other was stuck in the mucky dark," Kittredge explains)—without subjecting it to an Alpha-and-Omega-type analysis.

In the interest of illustrating this philosophical scheme, Mailer has populated his novel with characters who possess a double sexual nature. There are, besides all the adulterers, a bi-

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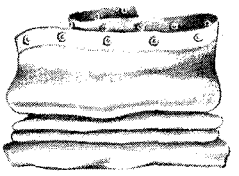

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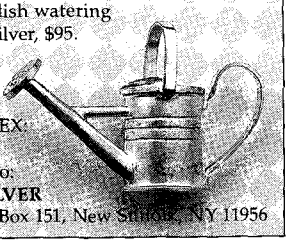

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sexual man; a closeted homosexual man, who eventually marries; even a hermaphrodite. Mailer further proposes—and this, I think, is meant to constitute the inner design of the narrative, the figure in the enormous carpet—that we view this inherent sexual doubleness as an explanation for the attraction of espionage, with its cover identities and its secret selves. Harlot is a harlot because he must separate what he shows himself to feel from what he feels in fact, and this habitual duplicity gives him (Mailer is quite successful at giving us this aspect of his character) a prostitute's hardness. But without a convincing dramatic embodiment (as opposed to a lot of characters deliberately constructed to display double personalities), this is all just inert theorizing. Not especially original theorizing, either: "the double agent in all of us" is a long-established platitude of spy fiction. And why do we need Kittredge's faux-brilliant thesis, endlessly repeated, to embellish the point? Only, I suspect, because we need Kittredge, and she has to be given something to do.

There is, finally, Mailer's idea of the C.I.A. He gives us an oddly divided (it's the one division in the book that doesn't seem deliberate) portrait. The agency Mailer has imagined is, in practice, an overgrown bureaucracy, forever tripping over its own feet—the Circumlocution Office of the Cold War. All its dastardly schemes, such as a plan to assassinate Castro with an exploding seashell, are comically unrealizable, and most of its conspiratorial energies are shown to be wasted in turf wars with the F.B.I. and the State Department. But then the terrain the agency operates on is so slippery that all its intelligence turns out to be moot anyway. If the Soviets know about Harvey's Berlin tunnel, for example, the material gathered from the taps is only misinformation, but that will at least tell us what the Soviets don't want us to know—but if the Soviets know that the C.I.A. knows they know about the tunnel the misinformation is tainted even as misinformation. And so forth.

On the other hand, Mailer endows his C.I.A. eminences, in their contemplative moments, with uncanny prescience. Harvey knows, as he explains to Harry in Berlin, that the Soviet military threat is exaggerated, and that the Communists cannot hope to win a war with the United States; the information is being deliberately suppressed, he says, to keep the American military buildup going. Harlot knows, as he explains later to Harry in Washington, that Soviet Marxism will pass, but the public, he insists, must not be told. The Cold War was all a game, in other words—a bluff designed to stoke anti-Communist militancy in the American public, and thus hurry the inevitable day when Communism would collapse of its own inefficiency. The C.I.A.'s function was not to protect us from the enemy, but to convince us that the enemy was real.

This isn't an indictment of the Cold War mentality; it's a congratulatory salute. It's standard Committee on the Present Danger stuff: we knew all along that Communism was doomed, you see, but we had to build those very expensive sabres and rattle them day and night so the Communists would wear themselves out trying frantically to keep up. And it worked: they quit; we won.

Having devoted much of his career to condemning the hypocrisy and waste of American Cold War policy, Mailer is now apparently happy to accept this version of winner's history. Others may remember things differently. Others may remember a political and intellectual culture damaged and debased for forty years by hysterical accusations and counter-accusations of being "soft on Communism." In the name of anti-Communism we meddled, often disastrously, in the internal affairs of other countries. A war was fought with the announced purpose of saving Southeast Asia from Communism, in which fifty thousand Americans and hundreds of thousands of Asians were killed and a generation was divided against itself permanently. And when the Communist bloc started to collapse, in 1989, no one in the West took credit for predicting it, and many in the C.I.A. warned that it might be a clever Communist ruse.

Was this all a chess game, played to perpetuate the illusion that Communism was a greater threat than we secretly knew it to be? Were all those billions poured down the rathole of the arms race—which nearly beggared our

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own country before it succeeded in bankrupting the Soviet Union—spent to counter a military danger we deliberately exaggerated? If Mailer believes this fantasy, there is no indication in "Harlot's Ghost" that he thinks any less of American foreign policy, or of the C.I.A., for it.

To many people of my generation—people who first began reading him in the nineteen-sixties—Mailer seemed an admirable force in American culture because of his aggressive and great-souled refusal to cater to sanctimony, whether it was the sanctimony of the establishment or of the establishment's enemies. He was not afraid to make himself look foolish in this cause, and he wrote things that were outrageously wrong at least as often as he wrote things that were courageously right. But he has never written a book so flaccid or so unwilling to challenge and provoke as this one. He has set the bar at the highest level, taken a long look, and then walked underneath it.

—Louis Menand

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

Two Lives, by William Trevor (Viking; $21.95). Two novels by this Irishman whose women protagonists are drawn with delicate intensity. In "Reading Turgenev," a dreamy Protestant farm girl, Mary Louise Dallon, marries a much older shopkeeper. It is 1955, and we see vividly the noisy pub where the couple toast their union with whiskey and cherry brandy, and the shabby seaside hotel where Mary Louise undresses under her nightgown and the drunken groom fails to consummate the marriage. Mary Louise truly falls in love when her invalid cousin begins reading to her from his favorite novels, and gradually his voice and Turgenev's Russian salons become more real to her than the rooms above her husband's drapery. The heroine of "My House in Umbria" is also smitten with make-believe: Mrs. Delahunty, a woman of questionable reputation, is a successful writer of romance novels. When she survives a terrorist bombing on a train to Milan, she invites the other victims of the explosion to convalesce at her idyllic Umbrian estate. Along with an aging general and a young German man

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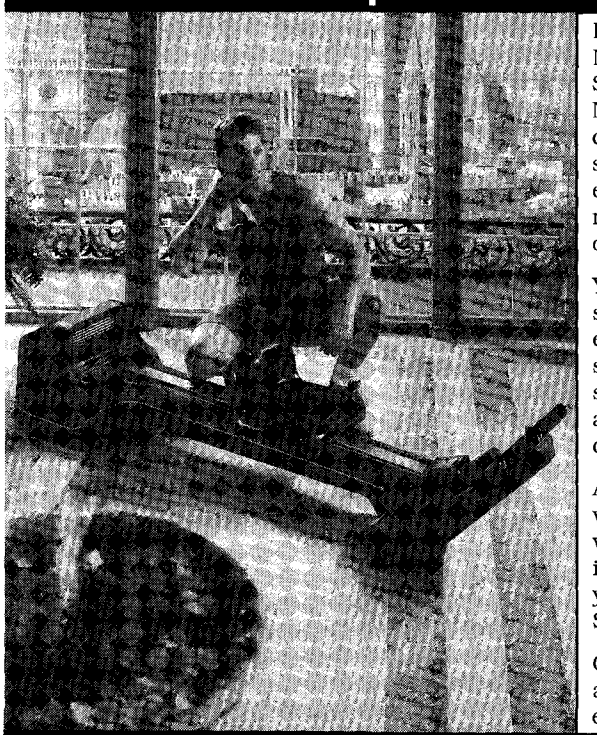

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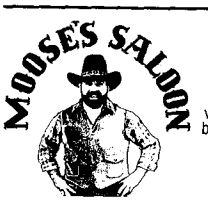

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who has lost an arm, Mrs. Delahunty becomes more and more invested in the healing of their youngest comrade—an American girl, orphaned by the bombing, who remains mute for some time afterward. Mrs. Delahunty proves an unreliable but colorful narrator—and the novel proves a tantalizing mind game—as she weaves compelling fictions about her companions into her account of their joint recovery.

NOTE: "Par Avion," Sempé's illustrated collection of letters home from a Frenchman visiting New York City, has been published by Knopf (translated by Helen Graves; $21). Much of the contents originally appeared in *The New Yorker*.

GENERAL

MAKE NO LAW: THE SULLIVAN CASE AND THE FIRST AMENDMENT, by Anthony Lewis (Random House; $25). This wonderful book tells the story of New York Times Co. v. Sullivan, a case that the Supreme Court decided in 1964. It arose from a suit brought against the *Times* by L. B. Sullivan, a Montgomery, Alabama, city commissioner, who claimed that an advertisement that had appeared in the *Times* in 1960 libelled him, although the text—an appeal for the civil-rights movement—didn't mention his name. Even so, an Alabama judge and jury awarded him half a million dollars; other libel suits, pending, exposed the paper to damages totalling more than three million. Still another libel suit—this one against CBS—clarified the purpose of these suits: to silence critics of Southern white resistance to the civil-rights movement. The choice of method was shrewd, for, as the law was understood in 1960, the First Amendment guarantee of freedom of the press did not apply to libel. Mr. Lewis's narrative explains how the *Times* attorneys were able to change our understanding of the law; his clarity is a marvel, every step of the way. He also helps the reader appreciate the moral as well as the legal problems of adjudicating between conflicting "good"s: protecting individuals from malice and defending the public's interest in free discussion of public affairs.

A NATION OF ENEMIES: CHILE UNDER PINOCHET, by Pamela Constable and Arturo Valenzuela (Norton; $24.95). This book's lucidity and its moderation help give general readers a better idea of the Chilean dictatorship than any other book so far. The authors explain that in 1973 most Chileans welcomed the military coup that overthrew the government of Salvador Allende; his policies had wrecked the economy, and many feared that his unpopular leftist supporters would use force to retain power and would transform Chile into another Cuba. Furthermore, the authors tell us, the public expected only a brief military interregnum before Chile returned to its traditional parliamentary democracy. Everybody, including the coup's leaders, underestimated General Augusto Pinochet, who shared many traits with his idol, Francisco Franco: a lack of charisma but a superabundance of cunning, tenacity, and ambition. Pinochet meant to acquire supreme power, and the authors are candid in discussing the flaws in Chilean society that permitted him to do so—for example, the traditional strict legalism of the judiciary, which deterred the courts from investigating allegations of human-rights abuses. There are many lessons in this book, and the authors' heartening conclusion is that Chileans, at least, have learned them.

GIORDANO BRUNO AND THE EMBASSY AFFAIR, by John Bossy (Yale; $29.95). The embassy of the title is the French Embassy in London in the fifteen-eighties, which was trafficking in plots to depose Queen Elizabeth and restore Catholicism to England. Within the Embassy was a spy who, under the nom de guerre Henry Fagot, was informing Elizabeth's Secretary of State of the plots afoot. The Italian philosopher Giordano Bruno was residing in the Embassy at the time, and it is Mr. Bossy's contention that Bruno and Fagot were one and the same. This conclusion is buttressed with evidence that is often plausible, sometimes speculative, and never conclusive but always robed in full scholarly trappings. The author seeks to keep the reader in suspense about the identity of Fagot, but the solution is clear from the start: Why else would Bruno be in the title? And to preserve the false suspense the book's plot gets bent out of shape, so we must go back over the same ground several times to have parts of the story filled in. In the end, the book is too speculative to make for convincing history and too academic to make for a good mystery.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY THOMAS JEFFERSON: LETTERS TO A PRESIDENT, edited by Jack McLaughlin (Norton; $22.95). These letters, selected from a huge archive, were written to President Jefferson during his two terms in office, from 1801 to 1809. Presented here with Jefferson's occasional notations, they are, in aggregate, an expression of the ideas, aspirations, and grievances of the common man at the dawn of American democracy. The letters come from laborers, farmers, sailors, small businessmen, inventors, and people in distress (and sometimes in jail), and in degree of literacy they vary from the florid rhetoric of the accomplished self-seeker to the down-to-earth "Sur I am Poor and Eant Nothing to Suport me and my famly on." Correspondents were in doubt, in those early days, about the proper way to address an egalitarian leader, and many struggled to avoid a servile tone and still show respect. Eighteen-year-old Nehemiah Badger seemed to think that "Sir Mr. Jefferson Pres." solved the problem. As social history, these letters are first-rate; they are also a lot of fun to read.

NOTE: "Movie Love: Complete Reviews, 1988-1991," by Pauline Kael, has been published by Dutton ($24.95). All the contents first appeared in these pages. . . . "Supermarketer to the World," a greatly expanded version of our Profile of Dwayne Andreas, by E. J. Kahn, Jr., has been published by Warner ($24.95).

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Works in the show are Lalo's Cello Concerto, Beethoven's Egmont Overture, "Homage to Mozart" by Ibert and Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 5, the "Referendum Symphony."—*Concord (N.H.) Monitor*.

Hear! Hear!

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